

# ***ANIMAL PESTS***



and

***How to Get the Upper Hand on 'em***

**...a handy-as-all-get-out handbook that'll  
give the homeowner a fightin' chance to  
protect the house and lawn.**

**by Steve Meyer**



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**QUIXOTE PRESS**

**R.R. #4, BOX 33B**

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PRESS**

*Bruce Carlson  
R.R. #4, Box 33B  
Blvd. Station  
Sioux City, Iowa 51109*

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## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my grandparents. They all took time out for me, my sister, and all my cousins; *problem* -- causin' critters in our own regard at times, I'm sure!





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## FOREWORD

Pesky critters bother people from all walks of life . . . . farmers, ranchers, homeowners, businesspeople, even the military . . . . all are bothered by confounded animals that find comfort in living or eating where we humans find it most annoying.

This guide book is full of practical remedies anyone can use to get rid of those varmits and resume a normal life. Practical home remedy pest control is like going to war. First you must understand the enemy. So first, in this book, we spend some time on basic animal behavior. Second, you need a strategy to counter the enemy. In pest control, there are four you can use to make life a little easier. And, finally, you need tactics. There are many, and I've tried to include all of them that are practical.





## INTRODUCTION

It's the great American escape. You come home from a good day's work, have a nice supper, spend a relaxing evening in the easy chair reading or watching the Boob Tube.

So, there you are, you've just tuned in to a good movie, gotten your favorite soda, popped some corn, dimmed the lights, nestled into your chair, and then . . . . What's that? A shadow scurries along the wall. The wife dashes out of the room and dives for cover under the kitchen table. Your kids are screaming and little Freddie, always the adventurous sort, points excitedly at something and hollers, "Look, Dad, a bat! Let's catch it so I can take it to school Monday."

Well, after a lot of shoutin' and carryin' on, you resolve that problem with only a few broken windows and a nick in the wife's favorite china cabinet.

When all the turmoil has died down and you've mentally added up the cost of that bat, you turn in. You drift off into dreamland. About the time you had a real neat thing going in that second dream, your peaceful slumber is rudely interrupted at about 3:00 A.M. by your terrified wife. All of the rustling and banging noise coming from the attic has got to be a ghost! Sleepy-eyed, you slowly open the attic hatch and find yourself face to face, not with the misty cloud of some departed soul but the beady eyes and snarling face of a raccoon!

And, don't forget the incident last week when you came home from work to find the wife and kids standing on your bed yelling at Freddie . . . ."Get it! Get it out of here!"

It had all started out as just an ordinary afternoon. The kids had come home from school and played Nintendo as

their mother prepared supper. Then . . . . then a mouse made a mad dash across the kitchen floor! As you came to the rescue and got into the fray, feathers were flying everywhere . . . . feather pillows slung at a mouse are absolutely without effect. Meanwhile, somehow, blueberry pie is dripping from the ceiling.

"How do I get rid of those @\$%^! pests?" It's a daily question in millions of homes. Otherwise calm and collected people react with anger, frustration, and sometimes rage over their inability to get rid of pesky critters. This book is your therapeutic guide to these problems.

I'm not covering, except where I have to, means of sending a nuisance animal to that great forest in the sky. Lots of folks don't go for that sort of thing, and with these home remedies, you won't even find it necessary to even think about going to that extreme.

I know that this is an odd time to bring it all up, but those furry, hairy, feathery little knotheads do have a reason to share this world with us, so this guidebook will focus on humane treatments for those pesky critters.

## **PESKY CRITTERS: WHAT, WHERE, AND WHY THEY ARE**

To understand why raccoons are turning your shed into a dormitory and why the rabbits have a feast on your homegrown prize-winning Burpee Butter Peas, you must first accept the fact that the varmints are innocent. That's right, innocent! They've gotta eat, and they've gotta have some place to come in out of the rain. We humans just plain made it easier for some animals to do this, and besides that, we've plopped cities and farms right down where they had their claims filed first.

So, because of all that, we end up spending millions of bucks in an effort to get those pests under control.



Wild animals can literally wreck havoc looking for food. Most notorious is the ever-hungry raccoon. A few raids of the garbage can or the sweet corn patch by hungry raccoons usually sends the homeowner to the local hardware store in an effort to find new and creative ways to spend some money. But, try to have a little understanding, they're only doing what they have to do to live!





## ANIMAL BEHAVIOR

Before you get all gung ho about rushing out and doing a number on your pesky friends, let's do one thing first. Let's learn a little about these critters. Every home remedy wildlife controller needs to understand animals and why they do what they do.

It's also not a bad idea to understand enough about animals so you can figure out exactly what pesky critter you're trying to get rid of. It's easy if you can actually see the animals, but that isn't always the case. Some of them aren't actually seen until they are caught or confronted.

You don't need a wall covered with degrees to understand why animals do the things they do. The basic reason for everything that an animal does (except reproduction) is he is looking for what he needs to survive; food and shelter. Like people, each animal has food it likes and dislikes and preferences about where they live. Some animals are finnickier eaters and some pick their neighbors carefully. Then there are those like the raccoon that will live nearly anywhere and eat nearly anything.

You've got to play Sherlock Holmes a little bit when you set off on an animal-control expedition. You're the investigator, and you have to know what your adversary is doing, figure out what its habits are, and then form a strategy to nab it.



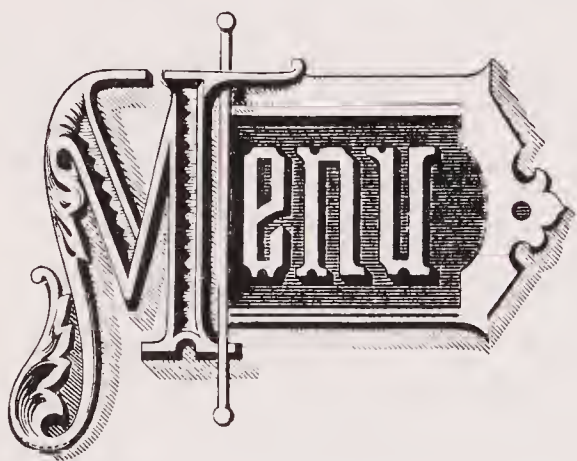
Just as a detective is good at reading people, a home animal-control expert needs to be able to read animal signs.



Most animals are secretive; the clues they leave behind are often sketchy.

Things to look for are: what does the animal eat? Where does he do his traveling? Where does he live? What kind of mischief is he up to? Understanding general animal habits will help you interpret these telltale signs.

There are three kinds of animals: herbivores, carnivores, and omnivores. Rabbits, squirrels, and groundhogs are herbivores. Their teeth are made for gnawing and cutting plants. Foxes, coyotes and weasels are carnivores with teeth designed for ripping and tearing meat. Raccoons and opossums are omnivores. These animals will eat anything that doesn't eat them first.



Each animal, regardless of its general food habits has its own likes and dislikes. For examples, cottontail rabbits (herbivores) like tender young green leafy matter. The fox squirrel (herbivore),

however, goes for the inner pulp of acorns, buckeyes and nuts. Both animals cause grief to homeowners. Those tender green sprouts are tailor-made for the cottontails, and the squirrels can make a real mess of your yard while burying nuts there for later use.

Animals are always looking for food. This instinct is taken advantage of in controlling pests, particularly when using cage traps. To entice an animal into a cage trap, the trap is baited with some goody or some fragrant scent of the animal's favorite food. Scraps of food eaten and left by an animal are good clues about what to use for bait.

The two senses of sight and smell are what most animals

use to find food. Generally, these senses are more acute in animals than they are in people. Raccoons are, for instance, victims of sweet teeth and are attracted to sweet odors such as that of honey. Opossums tend to be attracted by rotten-smelling things. Carnivores, like the coyote, go for the odor of fresh meat. The favorite goodies of the various animals are what the commercially prepared scents are based on.

Another important aspect of pest control is knowing where the animals live and travel. Knowing these things will help the homeowner figure out where to put the traps or figure out how to keep the varmints out in the first place. One good guide to follow is that almost any critter can live almost anywhere. If one listens too long to some of the tales the pros tell, it would make a person look under the bed before climbing into it every night.

Badgers tend to dig burrows to live in. The groundhog isn't above that sort of thing himself, but he will settle

for a comfortable cranny in  
an old, open building.

Squirrels live in hollowed  
trees, neighbors to raccoons.

But, those pesky coons will  
take up housekeeping almost  
anywhere. They like abandoned  
animal dens, culverts,  
buildings, attics, and even  
chimneys. Most urban  
storm sewers double as  
raccoon condos.

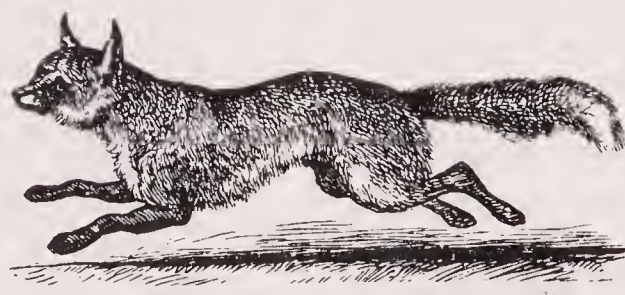
Clues to residences can  
be as easy to see as holes  
in hollow trees or freshly  
dug soil. Sometimes  
they are harder to spot.  
Squirrels can use a hole  
no larger than two or three





inches in diameter leading to your attic. Some critters actually prefer to live in our buildings rather than homes of their own making. Look for holes in the sides of buildings or foundations that could be serving as somebody's front door. Any opening they are using will show wear marks around the edges. Strands of animal hair may cling to the edges of the hole.

Where tall grass grows, it's easy to find animal trails. It's not so easy to find the paths of animals living in urban areas. Squirrels will travel along rooftops and power lines in cities. Concrete and well-manicured lawns don't make it easy to trail an animal. All this sometimes makes it necessary to actually see the animal to figure out what he is, and what he's up to. One thing to keep in mind is that most animals will tend to stay close to the side of a building, near the foundation, rather than out in the open lawn or street.



The time of day when animals are active varies. Squirrels move around during the early part of the day. Most animals, however, are the opposite of people. They sleep during the day and are active at night. That, in fact, is pretty much how my roommate in college was.

There are times of the year when animals are more active than others, and more likely to get into trouble. Mating season is during the spring for most of our furry friends. During this time, animals are more likely to be on the go as they are out hunting dates. In the fall, critters are often house hunting in anticipation of the coming winter. This is when mice sneak into our houses, squirrels move into our attics, and coons set up housekeeping in our chimneys. And, it's in the fall when squirrels do fun things like plugging up our downspouts with nuts and

such. Some more travel-oriented squirrels will find holes in cars to plug up with a stockpile of nuts. This makes for a lot of fun when you had other plans for those holes such as air intakes, exhaust pipes, and so forth.

Before you get bent all out of shape worrying about some of the goofy things critters will do, just remember, they have rights to food and shelter, and they don't mess around with our stuff out of malice. They have a lot to get done before the snow flies and don't always worry about your convenience.







## STRATEGIES FOR CONTROLLING PESKY CRITTERS

Yeah, I know. They root up our lawns, eat off our graden, and keep us up at night. Yet, we still owe our fellow wild companions a harmless and painless way out when we cross paths with them. It's the respectable thing to do! There are four basic strategies you can use in keeping those rascals under control:

- (1) Shuttin' 'em out
- (2) Scarin' 'em away
- (3) Messin' with their turf
- (4) Kickin' 'em out

And, here are some details on how to pull these off.

### Shuttin' 'em out

It only makes sense; if you can do something to keep them out, you've found a good.....maybe even permanent solution to your pest problem.

Here is where some of that detective work comes in handy. You need to find out where the pests are getting in and out of an area or a building, and then do something to put a stop to it. "Shutting 'em out" tactics are a basic tool for the home-remedy approach.

It can be as simple as patching holes in foundations so mice can't move in, or it can be as extreme as building eight feet tall fences to keep deer out of an apple orchard. Putting a barrier fence around your garden so Peter



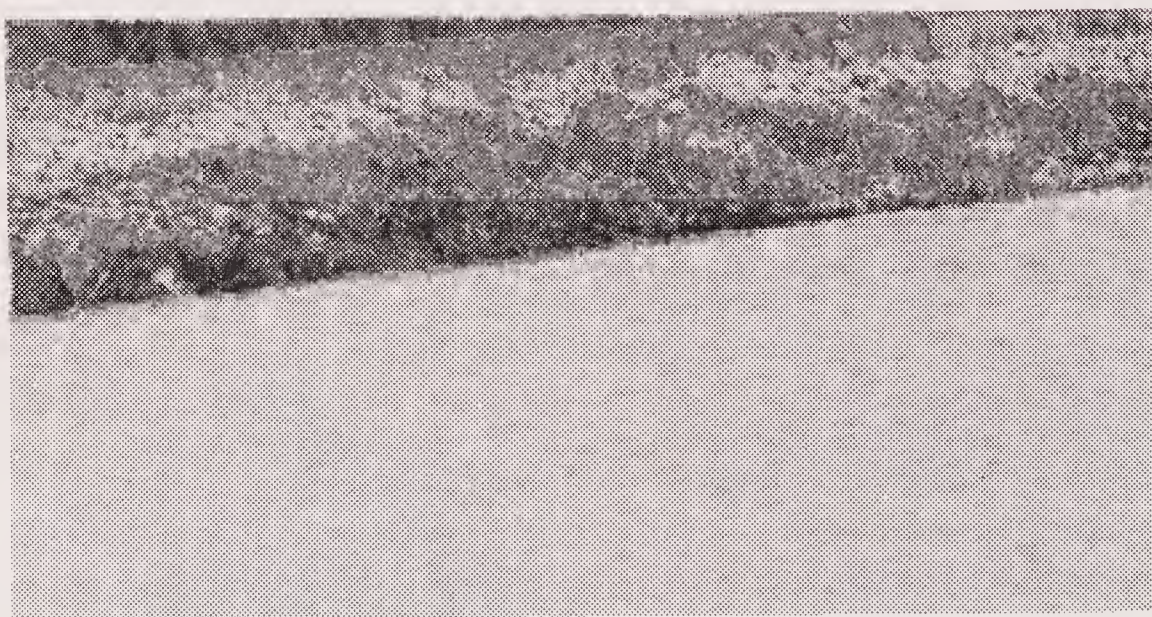
Rabbit can't get in isn't likely to break you, but building fences around orchards is costly and a lot of hard work.



The illustration below shows how a tree wrap can be used to keep pests from gnawing on trees or shrubs.



And, rip-rap (rocks, hunks of cement, or whatever) laid along streams, lakes and ponds keeps water rodents like muskrats and beavers from burrowing in the bank.



Be careful of a couple of things before you do anything aimed at keeping pests out. For one thing, don't do something that will jail them in instead of keeping them out. Secondly, be family friendly. Don't use any means like this when the animals are raising the young. If you shut out Mama, the babies can be left to die. If you're patching



up a building so pests can't get in, be sure you're doing it when your guests are out. Not taking this precaution can have any of several less than satisfactory results. You may end up with a very dead and very smelly animal on the premises. You might even suddenly find you have an unwelcome guest trying to live a lot closer to you than you want simply because the critter has no where else to go. Most folks don't especially enjoy having raccoons, opossums and the like crawl under the covers with them or find a whole litter of young whatever's dropping in for supper.

Sometimes we even have to play the role of Big Brother and keep a bully out who might be doing nasties to some songbird's nest or otherwise hasseling our buddies in the wild. Very often these bullies are a raccoon, a skunk, an



opossum or a crow. There is a device called The Nest Guardian that can be bought and attached to the opening of the birdhouse. This device really works well in keeping raiding varmints away from the eggs inside.

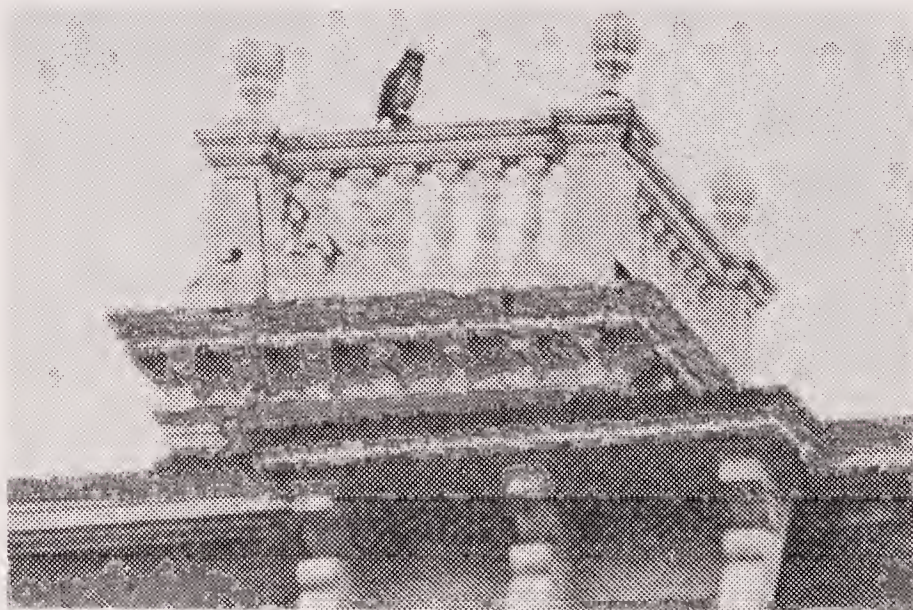
### **Scarin' 'em Away**

It's just pure fun to just scare the livin' bejammers out of someone, isn't it? And, if you really want to get even with some of the critters that have been making life tough for you, you can do just that to 'em.

For scaring critters, you may find it real workable to use the same thing that can scare the daylights out of parents . . . . a rock 'n roll band. Both loud noises and bright lights are good for scaring pests. Also, in this arsenal of scary things are such ploys as figures of other animals, and even chemicals. While common household things such as radios can do a good job, there are also specialized noise-makers designed for use against specific species of animals, expecially birds.

And, don't forget that such heavy artillery as the Blanchard Bird Scare Cannon not only works well against birds, but makes for a great party item. I mean, a man at a party is only a man at a party, but a man at a party with a cannon is something else!

Scaring, though, is usually only a short-term remedy. If you rely on scare tactics alone, you will probably be disappointed. Animals get used to such ploys. Where any long-term use of fright works, it is because several different scare devices are used together. For instance, where birds are kept away from an area with scare tactics, often an effigy such as an owl or a flying raptor kite is used along with something that makes a noise. When this is done, the location of the animal effigy must be changed periodically and likewise the timing of the noise-making



An owl effigy helps to ward off nuisance pigeons.



device. Usually, the best use of scare tactics is to initially scare a pest away, then use one of the other three strategies for a more permanent solution.

But, there's one word of caution on scare tactics: particularly chemicals. Be careful where you use them and how you use them. Make sure you follow the directions. Even such things as moth balls, which are a good repellent for many pests, can be toxic to people if they are used in an area where ventilation is poor.

### **Messin' with their Turf**

When an animal becomes a pest, it's all because it has found something in our territory they like. If we made our territory unappealing, we're probably not going to attract the pests in the first place.

So, it's simple, all you have to do is to cut down all the trees, plow up your lawn, forget about planting a garden, and you won't need to worry about having any pests around.



Well, okay, maybe that's a little radical. Seriously though, often all it takes is simple good house-keeping..... keeping your property cleaned up of refuse, rock piles, weeds, overgrown grass, etc. Sometimes more drastic measures, such as planting buffer strips around gardens, may need to be taken. At any rate, just

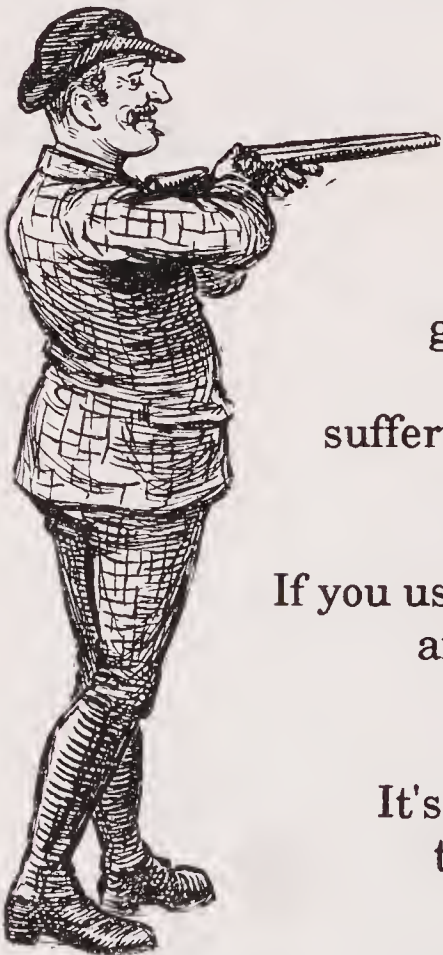
make the turf unappealing and the pests won't vacation there.

## Kickin' 'em Out

This can be as simple as slipping a jar over a bat and letting it go outside. But, usually it's going to be a little more difficult than that.

There are essentially two ways to kick 'em out: lethal means and cage traps. So you either get the gun or get the trap and go off on a pest-chasin' safari. I'd rather not see you try the first way, but if you don't have any choice, it is an option.

Some nuisance animals that are not protected animals can be sent to the great beyond however you feel is ap-



propriate. Just be certain that you check all the laws and regulations to make sure the animal is not protected; and if you're going to send it on, make sure you do so without causing suffering on the part of the animal.

Poisons work for some pests. If you use them, follow the directions, and don't put them where pets and kids can get to them.

It's better, however, to try everything else before you resort to using these lethal means.

Cage trapping is a highly effective and practical way of coping with pests. Cage traps are very popular because they're humane, capturing the animals alive and un-

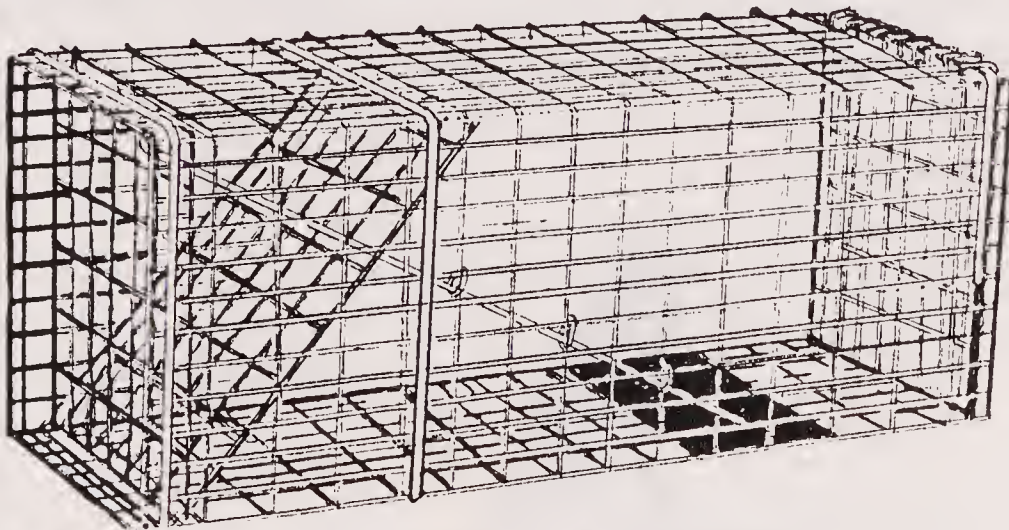


harmed.

You can get cage traps through mail order, at the local hardware store, or they can be rented or borrowed from local organizations such as humane societies.

Home handymen can build cage traps that work just as well as store-bought models, so I've included some cage trap building plans in this book.

All kinds of people use cage traps to get rid of pests, yet many people have problems with these traps because they simply don't understand how to use them. You don't find instructions written on the box, so we need to spend some time here on the basics.



The cage trap, a most useful and practical device for humane animal control.

There are two types of cage traps:

-Single entrance: This type has a single opening.

Either a door closes behind the animal, or the opening is designed so the animal cannot pass back through it.

-Double entrance: This type of cage trap has two openings, usually a door at either end of the trap.

Most cage traps are made from a steel framework covered

with galvanized wire mesh. Be certain the trap you are using is large enough for the varmit you are going after. A raccoon will not crowd itself into a rabbit-sized cage trap, but a rabbit will enter a raccoon-sized cage trap. So, larger traps will work for smaller animals, provided trip-pan tension can be adjusted. An animal will not jump up and down on a trip pan to set it off.

Special cage traps are made for animals that need a little different device. Traps made of galvanized sheet metal are available for use on skunks. These keep the captured skunk from spraying the trapper with its all-kinds-of-fun musk.

Kness Manufacturing Co. makes a mousetrap known as KETCH-ALL. The KETCH-ALL is a repeating cage trap, capable of making multiple catches.



*All steel cage trap for skunks made by Stendal Products, Inc.*

Other repeating cage traps are those for birds. These traps consist of a wire cage with one or more funnel-type entrances allowing birds to enter but not to get back out again. And, at least one company, TRU-CATCH, makes a special cage trap for catching our long slithery friends.

The most elaborate "special" cage traps are those for catching beaver. Beaver cage traps, called "clam" or "suit-case" traps, have a trip pan right in the middle of two

cage portions that fold up around the beaver. Two brands of beaver cage traps are made; the Bailey Live Beaver Trap and the Hancock Live Beaver Trap.

To use cage traps successfully you've got to know where to put them, how to hide them, what kind of bait to use, how to secure them, and you gotta check them regularly.

A cage trap isn't some sort of call that says to an animal, "Come here, come run inside of me and get caught." Animals won't go out of their way to get into these contraptions. A guy who tells you his cage trap will pull animals in from the next county tells lies to other people, too.

Set the cage trap right in the areas where animals are living, traveling, or looking for food. If you don't set them in such places, you simply will not catch anything. Set cage traps off to the side of the trail, just a few feet away, and bait them. Similarly, you can also bait, hide and set cage traps directly in areas where an animal is feeding. Double entrance cage traps can be set directly in the animal's trail. If the trap is lined up with the trail, a critter can walk right into it.

Cage trap sets need to blend in with what's around them. If you don't disguise them, only the dumbest of animals will blunder into this bunch of steel and wire you've stuck in their way. Traps set in lawns or grassy areas should have weeds, grass, leaves, and sticks pulled up around them. Throw some leaves or grass inside the thing too. In wooded areas try putting the trap right in or behind a brush pile, then pull brush around the trap to hide it. Use some ingenuity and what is natural to the area when hiding traps. Around houses put cage traps in the bushes. In barns or near hay stacks, hay bales stacked around will hide it. A well-hidden cage trap will resemble a hole or cubby, something animals normally poke their noses into to see what's inside.

Once you've located and hidden the cage trap, the animal



needs a little coaxing to make it go in. Animals are enticed into cage traps by appealing to their appetites with bait and lures. Many good animal baits are common household food items such as honey, tuna, corn, and even sweet rolls.

Commercially prepared lures and baits that work well with cage traps can be bought from fur-trapping suppliers. The odor given off by lures is that of some favored food of the pest you're after. Be careful when using commercially-made baits and lures. Follow the manufacturer's directions and use the stuff sparingly. If you use too much it will probably work just the opposite and scare the animal away.

When you bait the trap, put the bait at the rear of the trap so the animal must pass over the trip pan to get at the bait.



To entice an animal into a cage trap, put small hunks of bait at the entrance. This will soften him up toward being piggish enough to go inside to get the goodies in there.

It's a good idea to tie your trap down, or weight it down so some furry thief doesn't make off with it.

Once you set a trap you are honor-bound to check it, and check it enough times that a critter caught in it isn't imprisoned for over twenty-four hours at most. It is far better to check the traps twice a day. If you can do it only once a day, try to do it so as to minimize the time the animal has to stay in it. For nocturnal animals like coons, check it in the morning, and for critters out among 'em in the daytime, check it in the late afternoon.

When you do check the trap, don't go rushing up like some kind of fireman. Cool it so you don't get any occu-

pants all lathered up. They can hurt themselves if they get over-excited. Also try to check them from as far away as you can. Humans don't smell good to other animals, you know. This increases your chance of success.

Remember, a cage trap is a strange and alien thing to an animal. He's going to be a bit gun-shy at first, so give him time. If, however, you don't score in a week, something needs to be fixed. Put in fresh bait, and be sure it's working. Maybe you're not holding your mouth right, maybe God's got it in for you, or maybe you have the trap in the wrong place. You can take some comfort from the fact that even a blind hog finds an ear of corn now and then, and you might do a bunch of things wrong and still catch a pest with more hair than brains. But, you can't depend on that. It's best to figure out what you can do to improve your chances.

## THE VARMITs THEMSELVES

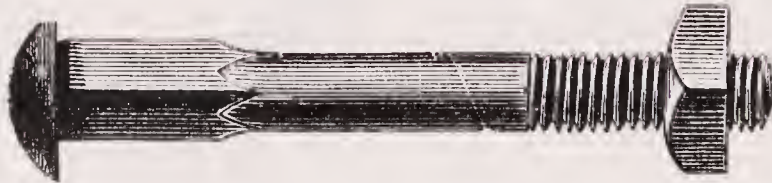
### TIPS ON CONTROL

You probably wouldn't be reading this book unless you were being bothered by one or more of the pests that plague us.

You're either bothered by diggers, harassed by vandals and scoundrels, ripped off by thieves or hassled by the dastardly duo.

This section tells you which is which, and how to get the best of the little %#\$%@'s. Of the four control methods (Shuttin' 'em out, Scarin' 'em away, Messin' with their turf, and Kickin' 'em out) you may want to use one of these, or you may want to try some combination of them.

I'm not fluffing this book up with a bunch of stuff about ways that won't work. These are proven methods, so listen up.



Much of the stuff you'll need for your home -- brewed animal control toys are right under your nose there in your shop or garage. You might have to make a couple trips to your local hardware store or garden supply store. It is not necessary to sink a fortune or a lot of time or work into getting yourself armed for these kinds of projects.



## DIGGERS

Ah, the pleasure of a well-manicured lawn. You have toiled over it, babied it, mowed it and trimmed it. It looks beautiful, like a golf course, no less. There's even a rumor that Better Homes and Gardens has their eye on you for a magazine cover.

That is, until you wake up one fine morning and find that your lawn is a jungle of craters, mounds of dirt, and little ridges.

No, the country didn't go to war while you slept. But, you're ready to. The bad guys are diggers and scoopers who live underground where it's hard to get to 'em. They're badgers, moles, and pocket gophers.

For these suckers, land mines work just real well, but the cleanup is a bit unwieldy and the neighbors can get real testy if you resort to mines. Also, a lot of unusual people tend to ask a lot of unusual questions when you stockpile military ordinance.

There are better answers to enable you to get even with the invaders.

## Badger

Except for the badger's buddy, the wolverine, this member of the weasel family is one of the baddest guys on the block.

So, be careful of these dudes. They're short and squatty, with long gray-colored hair, black paws and a black patch on top of their heads. They have a white stripe down the middle. They can weigh up to thirty pounds,, some of the toughest pounds imaginable, and they can outdig any other mammal on the North American continent. In fact, they can outdig two good men equipped with shovels!



Badgers prefer open country with light to moderate cover. They usually live and hunt in pastures, range lands, and open fields.

The badger munches down on smaller burrowing rodents like ground squirrels and pocket gophers. He may eat rabbits and invade the nests of ground-nesting birds.

While these critters are nocturnal, they may be spotted now and then at dawn or other times in the day. Their dens are easy to see. The entrance is often ten to fifteen inches in diameter, often on the slopes of roadside

ditches. During cold snaps, the badger may become dormant and hole up in his den for up to a month.

Badgers are seldom seen, but the sign they leave is quite noticable. As they dig after rodents for food, they make numerous burrows of varying depths and size. They'll

make several dens, as many as ten per square mile. Tracks of the badger, if seen, resemble those of a dog or coyote, except for the longer toe nails.



Badgers have been known to kill small lambs and poultry. They easily get at them by digging under fences or through the floor of poultry houses. The biggest annoyance of renegade badgers is the many small holes and dens they dig.

Anyone with pesky badgers is faced with a decision. Badgers are the best natural control agent there is for small rodents. If you get rid of the badgers, your problems with small rodents will get worse.

### **Shuttin' 'em Out**

Because badgers are such good diggers, fences and other such things just don't work. They'll be under that fence, no matter how deep you put the wires.

### **Scarin' 'em Away**

Badgers can be kept from preying on livestock and poultry with high intensity lights that keep livestock and poultry pens lit up at night. Radios or anything else that makes human noises also work.



## **Messin' with their Turf**

Get rid of the rodents around the place and the badger will go somewhere else to find his food.

## **Kickin' 'em Out**

The same techniques that work for catching coyotes and foxes in cage traps will work for badgers, but a cage trap may not hold them. These animals can use their powerful legs and claws to literally tear through the side of a cage trap in short order. If you do try cage trapping, and are successful, handle the badger with extreme caution. They have been known to turn and chase their captors once they are released from a cage trap. And, believe me, if you have a mad badger hot on your trail, it'll take your mind off income tax in one big hurry.

Don't waste your time setting a cage trap at the entrance of a badger's den, thinking he'll run into the trap. They're a whole lot smarter than that! They'll just dig around the trap and be on their way.

## Moles

Moles are brown, furry critters who are rarely seen above ground. They'll weigh in at about four ounces and will measure about seven inches long full grown.

Moles are distinguished by their naked pointy snout, small eyes hidden in their fur, and large forefeet attached to stubby arms. They use their paddle-like front feet to almost swim through the soil, just beneath the surface, searching for insects and other such morsels.



Moles live throughout the Great Plains and the eastern United States. Grassy areas with loose, moist soils are their favorites. You'll know you have moles when you see raised ridges of soil two to three inches high, all interconnected in a maze-like pattern. It is with those ridges that the moles do their dirty work, disfiguring lawns, gardens, flower beds, and so forth.

Keeping these pests under control can be frustrating. You hear lots of home remedies and old wives tales on how to do it. There just isn't a quick, clean, and one hundred percent solution.

### Shuttin' 'em Out

Moles can be kept out of flowerbeds and yards by using a

buried barrier fence of one quarter inch hardware cloth. The barrier needs to be at least eighteen inches deep.

### **Scarin' 'em Away**

Some people have driven pesky moles away using children's pinwheel devices with the handles stuck into the ground. Supposedly, the vibrations caused by the rotating wheel scare the moles away. Or they can be sometimes driven from their burrows by sticking a garden hose in one of the tunnels and letting it run for a while. Then, if you feel lucky, you might get out in the yard early in the morning when moles are most active, in hopes of catching those little rascals pushing up a new ridge as it lengthens its tunnel. You might jab a spade in the ground just behind him, and pitch him up in the air so he ends up on top the ground where you've got him surrounded.

### **Messin' with their Turf**

The only sure-fire way of doing this to keep them away is controlling their food supply. A good insect-control program will keep insects and invertebrates from living in the lawn. No goodies, no moles.

### **Kickin' 'em Out**

Moles can be live-trapped using a pit style of trap. To pull this off, all you need is a three-pound coffee can and a few boards.

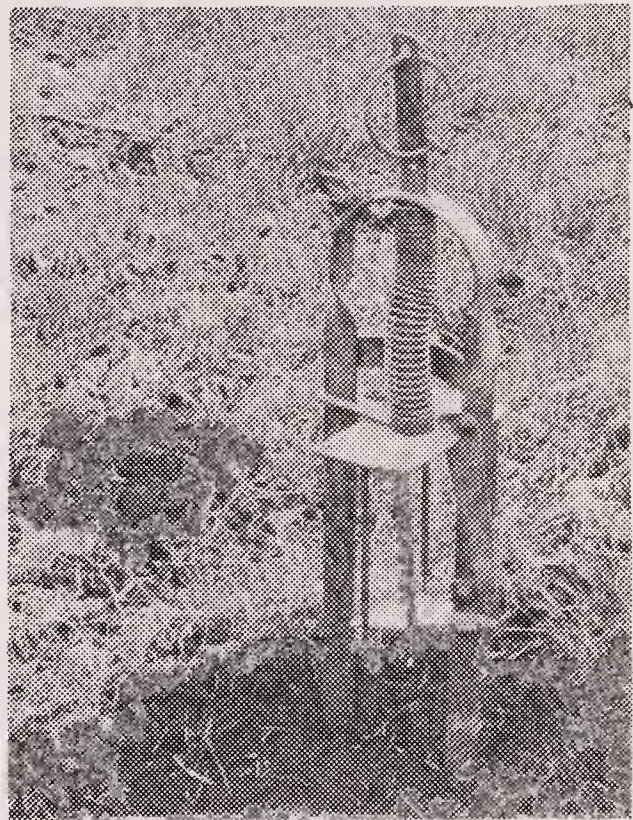
Find a place where moles are active, dig a hole in a fresh mole tunnel large enough to put the can in the hole. The upper lip of the can must be below the mole's tunnel. Cover the top of the hole with the boards and pack it well with dirt so the mole can't see any light. If he sees light, he'll avoid that area. When Mr. Mole runs down that tunnel, he'll fall into the coffee can, and won't be able to get out. You'll have him then.



A few kinds of traps for moles that send the critters to that great golf course in the sky, can be bought from hardware or garden supply stores.

To use these, find an area showing fresh signs of mole work and dig out a small portion of the mole's tunnel. Fill this area with loose soil, then set the trap in this area. Another method that may work is to set the trap just off the end of a runway. The mole, at some time, will probably make its runway longer and be done in by the trap.

*This is the common mole harpoon trap.*



Toxic fumigant cartridges are also available for mole control. These can be bought from hardware or garden supply stores and are used by putting the cartridge directly into the mole's tunnel. Poison peanuts will not work since moles are carnivores and rarely eat plants.

## Gophers

Gophers are burrowing rodents best known for their habit of dumping soil from their tunneling in large mounds on top of the ground.



Gophers range in size from five to fourteen inches in length and the color of their fine, soft fur ranges from nearly black to pale brown to almost white. They have large front feet equipped with long claws for digging. On each side of the gopher's mouth are the characteristic pockets, or folds of skin. Those little suckers pack those folds full of dirt and move to the surface to dump it.

Unlike moles, gophers do have eyes worthy of the name. They also have large front incisors for gnawing and chewing. Their short tail is sparsely haired and serves as a sensory mechanism to guide them around their dark tunnels.

Like moles, the life of a gopher is entirely subterranean, though they do come up when they dump their dirt in conical mounds. These mounds range in size from one to four feet in diameter and may contain a bushel or more of dirt. You'll find no entrance into the labyrinth below there in those mounds, they plug it up too well.



The tunnel is two to four inches in diameter and is from six to twenty-four inches under ground. They also dig deeper shafts for nesting quarters and to store their food.

This whole system of mounds, tunnels, and shafts will be concentrated in a rather small area, sometimes no more than a few hundred square feet.

Gophers are vegetarians. They eat the roots of plants, and sometimes pull an entire plant down into their tunnel from below. There are several documented cases of carrots suffering emotional disturbances from being pulled down into the ground when they expected, all that time, to be pulled up out of the ground.

The most obvious sign of gophers is the telltale conical mounds of dirt they carry to the surface. If gophers have only recently moved into an area, there may be only a few or even only a single mound. If they've been around for a time, there will be a cluster of mounds, some fresh and some old.

Gophers are pretty much world-class eaters and consume huge amounts of plant food every day.

While they do some good by turning the soil over and aerating it, it's kind of hard to get just real excited about those goodies while your yard starts looking like a war zone.

So most folks want to get shed of them.

### **Shuttin' 'em Out**

Bushes, trees, and other ornamental plants can be protected by burying a barrier of one quarter inch hardware mesh in the ground. Now, here comes the fun part ..... at least twenty-four inches deep and completely around the plant.

## **Messin' with their Turf**

One thing you can do is to keep the lawn well-irrigated and moist. The moist ground makes the gopher's tunnels cave in easily, and they don't like that at all.

## **Kickin' 'em Out**

There is no cage trap that works for gophers, but a pit-type trap can be used. Pit traps are made by using a five-gallon bucket and some boards. Find the freshest looking gopher mound and dig down in the place where the gopher has plugged the opening. This spot will have a horseshoe-shaped outline on the mound. Dig down about eighteen inches, then probe the ground until you find the tunnel. Dig back into the tunnel, and then under it to a depth that allows you to set the five-gallon pail so its lip is under the tunnel. Cover the hole up with the boards and then cover the boards with dirt to keep any light from getting in. If you do it right, it's going to be good-bye gopher time. He'll drop into that bucket and be unable to get out.

The other methods of removing gophers are lethal. Various designs of gopher traps such as the Macabee gopher trap, the Victor gopher trap and the Death-Klutch gopher trap can be bought at a garden supply store. These things work, and you don't have to do as much digging as for the five-gallon bucket gig. When you find the tunnel, just insert the trap and cover the hole to keep light out. If that little critter sees any light, he'll push dirt out ahead of himself, clog the trap and you won't catch him.

Various poisons and toxic fumigants are made to use on these little critters. One common product is the poison peanut or poison grain that must be dropped into the tunnel. A probe is needed to pull this off. They can be bought or made. Once you drop the poison down into the tunnel, you must tamp the small hole closed again. Bait the tunnels in several places.

## THIEVES

They send people to prison for stealing. Those pests we classify as thieves are always after a bellyful of some culinary delight at our expense. Sometimes they leave all kinds of evidence to let you know they were there. Other times, like a real skilled thief, they're so sneaky their crimes go unnoticed for quite some time.



Like other thieves, these critters should be brought to justice.

Bobcats, cottontails, coyotes, deer, foxes, and squirrels are all known for their habits of stealing their meals from our gardens, yards, fields, and livestock pens.

Let some little old lady lose her prize petunias to one of these thieves, and you'll see what they mean about a woman scorned.

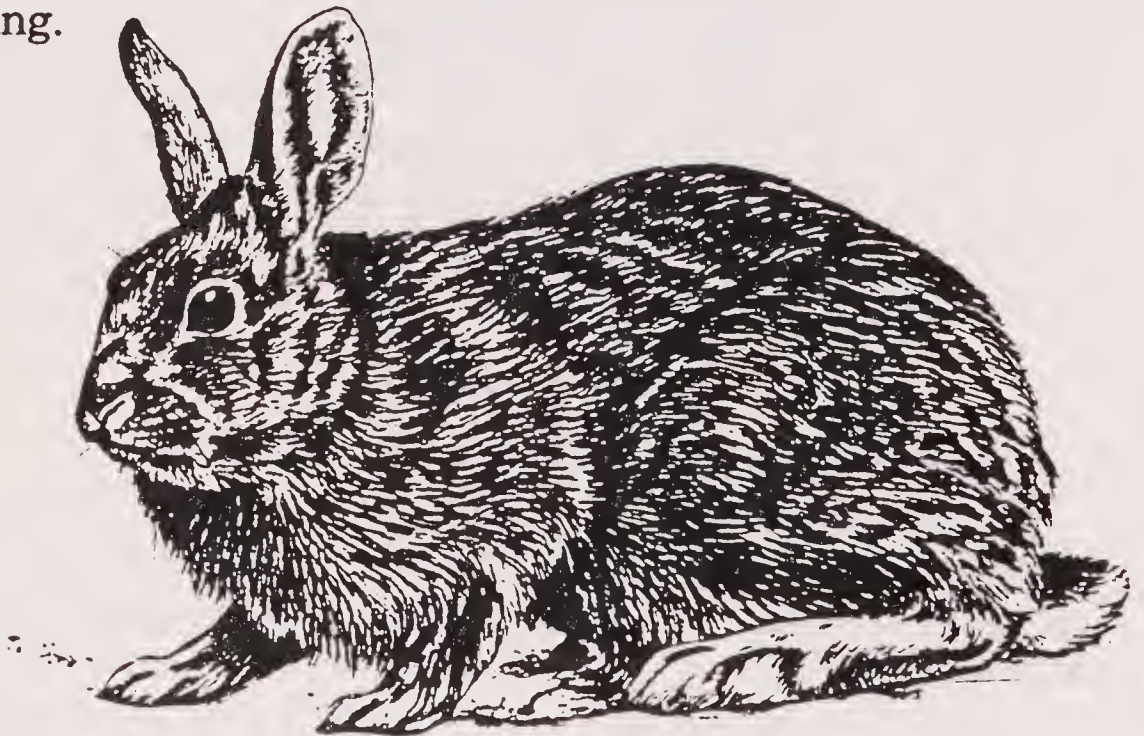
But, with a little common sense and some practical remedies, these pests (the animals, not the little old ladies) can be put in their places.



## Cottontails

Wherever there is long grass or a little brush for cover, and a good food supply, you'll find these little rascals. They concentrate in brushy fence rows, field edges, gullies filled with junk or brush piles, or even nicely landscaped yards.

Cottontails use natural cavities or other animal burrows as places to live. They also like to stay in brush piles or under buildings. In the spring or fall, cottontails use a grass or weed shelter called a "form". The form is a next-like cavity on the ground. It protects rabbits from the weather and is used mostly for hiding and raising their young.



Cottontails are herbivores and will eat nearly any living plant. They prefer, of course, the more expensive stuff.

These uninvited guests are often seen. Even if we don't see them, we can tell when they've done their dirty work. They will damage crops, flowers, and ornamental plants. They'll gnaw on older woody plants, leave tracks and those distinctive pea-sized round droppings.

There isn't a season of the year that the cottontail can't find some way to irritate us. They gobble down all our

expensive plants in the spring and summer. Then, come winter, they have new and improved surprises in store for us. For it is then that they turn their attention to gnaw on woody plants, shrubs, orchard trees, and so forth. Even a large tree can be completely girdled by their world-class chewing and gnawing. Apple trees, raspberry plants and blackberry plants are their favorites.

Among shade and ornamental trees that they hit the hardest are mountain ash, basswood, red maple, sugar maple, honey locust, ironwood, oak, and willow ..... and anything else that's expensive.



### **Shuttin' 'em Out**

Rabbits can be kept out of gardens and flowers by putting up a fence of chicken wire or some other wire with openings no more than two inches in diameter. Bury the fence at least six inches in the ground, and be sure it's at least two feet high.

Commercially made, or homemade, guards can be wrapped around the bottoms of tree trunks and the stems of shrubbery to prevent damage. Be sure the guards extend up at least two feet above the highest expected snow accumulation.



Wire guards will work, but they must be spaced out a few inches from the trunk so the bunnies won't reach through. Guards made from something solid like sheet metal, plastic, or even foil are best. Easiest to use is the commercially made tree wrap or tree tape available in garden center.



Plastic tree guard to keep rabbits from gnawing an ornamental tree

### **Scarin' 'em Away**

Several chemical repellents are available specifically for rabbits. Other repellents that work are naphthalene (moth balls) and blood meal spread around the plants. Blood meal will wash away, so it needs to be replaced after each rain.



## **Messin' with their Turf**

One of the best things you can do to see the end of cottontails is to make the area free of trash. For Peter Cottontail, no place to hide is no place to live.

## **Kickin' em' Out**

Cottontails are easy to catch in cage traps. You can set the traps right in the gardens and lawns they are messing up. You might want to hide the trap, but don't go to any serious efforts because rabbits are that easy to get. It is important that they be baited with bunny goodies. Carrots and apples work well.

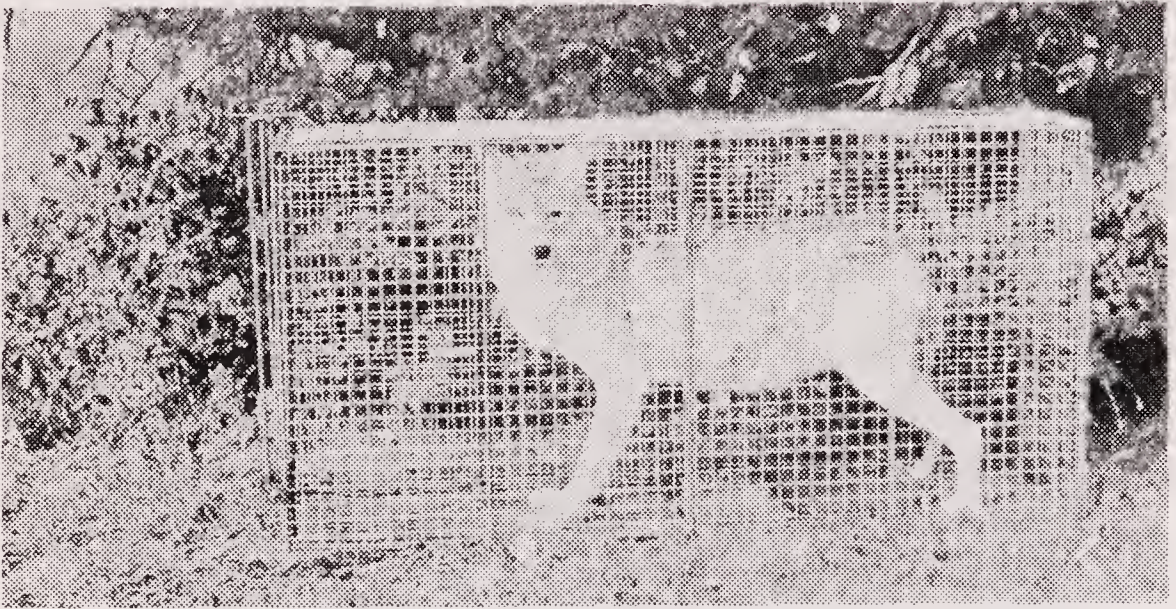
Both single and double-door cage traps work well for cottontails. Traps should be in the size range of 10" x 10" x 24" to 12" x 12" x 36".

Many a cottontail has been caught in homemade wooden cage traps that were simply set in the middle of the yard with virtually no cover.

It's a good idea where cottontail populations are high to leave a trap set all the time. That way, if a new cottontail with bad manners moved into the area, you get him before he makes his move.

## Coyotes

Coyotes look like a collie dog with pointed ears, a slender muzzle, and a bushy tail. They are mostly gray, with a light gray to cream-colored belly, and dark guard hairs over their back and tail. They will generally weigh in at twenty to thirty-five pounds.



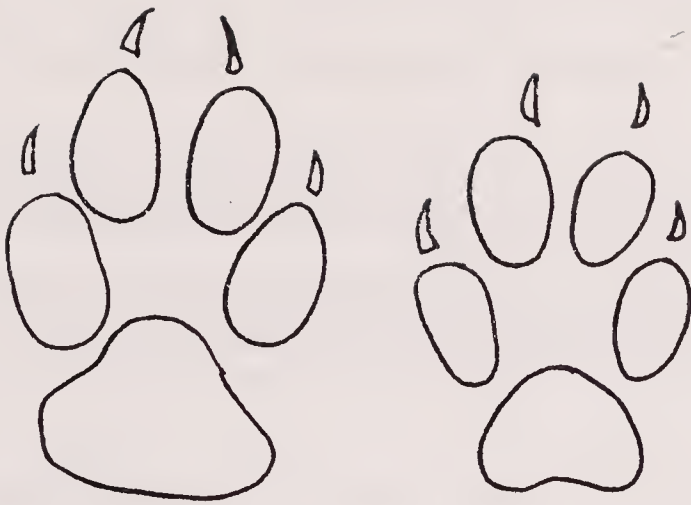
Mostly active at night and during the early hours of the morning, coyotes may cover a territory of twenty miles in a night of hunting. They have good eyesight, good hearing, and a nose that just won't quit.

These critters will bed in sheltered areas, and use dens only for raising their young. The dens will have openings about a foot in diameter and are usually ground burrows that were built by some other animal such as badgers or foxes.

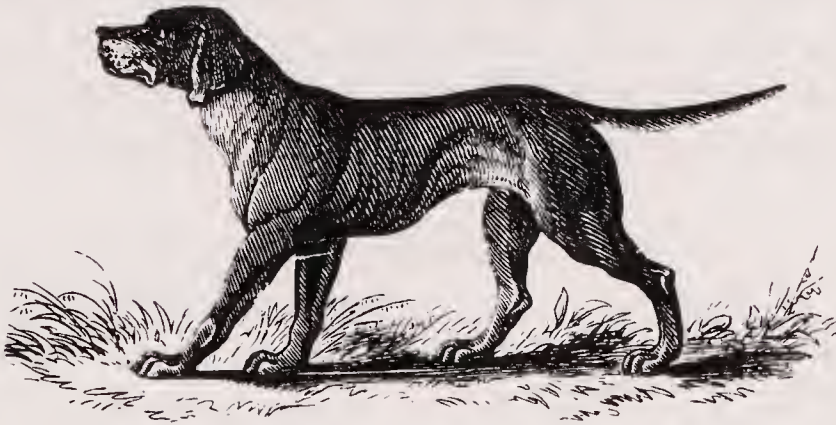
Coyotes prey on any animal in the size range of mice to sheep, but they are not above munching down on dead deer, elk, or livestock. In the cities, they thrive on garbage.

Coyotes are clever enough that they are not seen very often. But, there are signs of their having been around. Their prints are as shown (*next page*), and typically about three and a half inches long from front to back.





Animal kills are another sign. Coyote victims are evidenced by puncture wounds in the head and throat area. Coyotes usually eat the soft tissues such as the liver and kidneys of their victims. Dogs, on the other hand,



attack an animal at the flanks and mutilate the prey. Both dogs and coyotes usually eat their kill on the spot; they don't often drag them away.

### **Shuttin' 'em Out**

Penning or otherwise confining livestock will protect them from coyotes. It can help some to make sure fences are tight to the ground, and have no openings that will let a coyote through. Electric fences can also be useful at times.



In cities where coyotes are bothering garbage cans, either put the cans inside or put something heavy on top of the can, or fasten the lid well with a hasp.

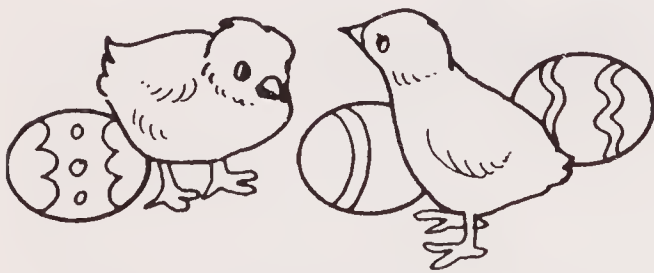
### **Scarin' 'em Away**

The presence of people, or strange or offensive sounds will repel coyotes. Various sonic devices, exploders, sirens, recorded distress calls, lights, and scarecrows have been used to put the fear of God into those wily critters.

But, when you've taken it upon yourself to match wits with a coyote, you best be on your toes because they are smart as all getout. You might have to come up with a variety of techniques to keep your adversary on the run.

### **Messin' with their Turf**

There aren't any good answers here. About the only thing you can do is to remove the coyotes' natural prey. If you can do this, you might well not want to, simply because it will lead the coyote to pick on something else like livestock.



You're going to really know the meaning of being in hot water if you convince your coyote to munch down on your kids' Easter chicks.

### **Kickin' 'em Out**

Coyotes are difficult, but not impossible, to catch in cage traps. Trying to catch one is a lot like taking one of those HOW'S YOUR WORD POWER? in the Readers' Digest. You almost hate to try it for fear of being shown up, yet you need to do it anyway. So it is with trapping coyotes. You're not up against a slouch when you take on one of them, so if you fail, don't feel bad.

Coyotes living in cities may be a bit easier than their more wily cousins. You should pretty much follow the same precautions and procedures described in the section on trapping foxes.

Bigger traps are needed for coyotes. Cage traps should be a minimum of 15' x 24" x 48" for coyotes.

Good bait for coyotes is any slightly spoiled red meat. Live baits such as a white rabbit or chicken work well. Of course, rabbits and chickens have a slightly different opinion of this.



## Deer

There are two common species of deer in America. The common white-tailed deer is found in every state of the Union except Alaska and Utah. The mule deer lives in the western part of the United States.

Adult deer can vary widely in their size and weight due to their diet and the local environment.

Deer are creatures of the forest. However, they like the forest edge rather than the dense interiors. Their favorite is agricultural areas with patches of woodlands and other rough ground scattered around between and along the fields. Here in the Midwest deer will spend almost the entire year living in corn and other crop fields.

Besides their tracks that are easily seen in mud or snow, the presence of deer can be detected from the damage they do. Trees can really catch it from deer. They are





notorious for eating farm and orchard crops, especially apples and corn. They are not above eating stacked hay, and ornamental trees and shrubbery ..... especially if they are expensive.

Figuring out who done it is rather easy with deer. They lack upper incisors, and they leave a jagged surface on twigs and stems where they have eaten. Rodents, on the other hand, leave a clean cut surface and don't reach as high to browse as deer do.

Where deer populations are high, they can cause a lot of damage. In some areas, such as resorts and city parks, where sport hunting is not allowed, deer populations soar, and they never leave the safe haven of their refuge. In



fact, there are urban areas with more deer than rural ones a few miles away. While they may be pretty, they come at a high price to folks with gardens or ornamental trees. They also cause many auto accidents.

### Shuttin' 'em Out

The only sure way to keep pesky deer away is to fence them out. And be ready to pay, cause it's going to take a wire mesh fence at least eight feet high.

A wire fence built at an angle of about 45 degrees facing outward from the area to be protected can be built using either woven wire, high tensile wire or electrified wire. The top of such a fence needs to be at least six feet off the ground. Deer will walk along under such a fence, unable to figure out how to jump over it.

Of course, you've got to be ready to explain to both the neighbors and your mother-in-law what you're doing building a fence that doesn't stand up straight.

### **Scarin' 'em Away**

Deer can be scared away with exploding devices, gun blasts, and barking dogs. But, these will work for only a while; then the deer will get used to the noise and go about their business.

There are a variety of repellents that are available. These are of two types ..... contact and area.

Contact repellents are sprayed or painted directly on plants. Several commercial mixtures are on the market.

Some home remedies work also. A mixture of two tablespoons of hot pepper sauce mixed with ten gallons



of water sprayed onto the surfaces of fruit and ornamental trees will help. This solution has the drawback of not lasting long, since it has to be reapplied frequently. Besides that, it doesn't work well on Mexican deer.

Area repellents are applied near the plants to be protected, and keep deer away by smell. Moth balls (naphthalene) or human hair placed in mesh bags and hung in trees in the area where deer are bothering will help keep them away. Blood meal works, too.

### **Messin' with their Turf**

This doesn't work. In order to do any good you would have to strip the area of brush and trees.

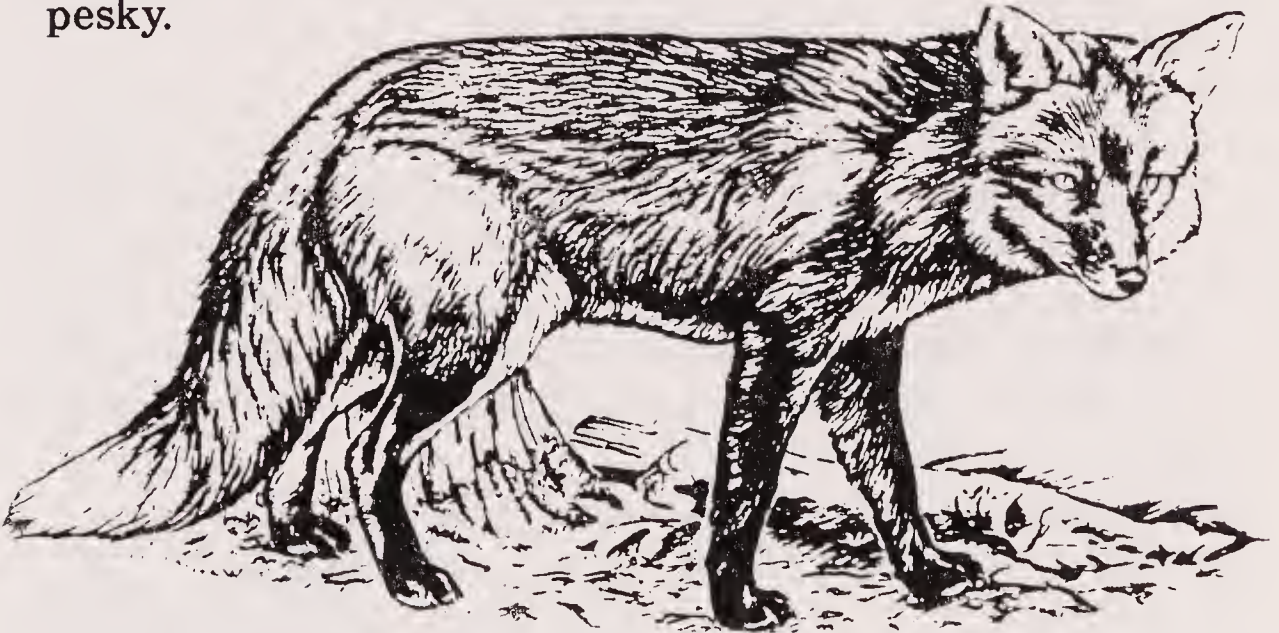


## Kickin' 'em Out

Don't try to be a Marlin Perkins in your own little Wild Kingdom. Leave that to the experts for this critter.

### Foxes

There are several species of foxes in North America. Red and grey ones are the most common, and two of the most pesky.



Red foxes look like small dogs. Adults weigh in at ten to fifteen pounds and measure three feet or more from nose to tail. They are reddish yellow with cream to white on the belly. The greys will go from seven to thirteen pounds and are from thirty-two to forty-five inches long. They tend to be salt and pepper grey with a buff-colored under-fur.

The red fox can live almost anywhere but prefers open country with moderate cover. Greys prefer denser cover such as thickets, swamp land, cedar ridges, and forests. They are both nocturnal.

These dudes are fast on their feet and can easily run down a rabbit. By nature, foxes are wary, solitary animals that normally don't live close to people. They use burrows, wood piles, rocky outcroppings, and hollow trees as



dens. Their senses of vision, hearing and smell are very keen. Being predators, they use their senses to help them catch rabbits, mice, birds, and insects. Seldom will they kill anything larger than a rabbit, although sometimes a fawn, pig, lamb, or chicken will be taken.

Foxes are sly and you can seldom see them. Sometimes, the only sign you'll find will be the footprints.



**Gray Fox**



**Red Fox**

They may carry their prey off from where they killed it to eat it at their convenience, or they may bury it somewhere with the intention of eating it later.

### **Shuttin' 'em Out**

Wire fences with openings of three inches or less will keep foxes out of livestock pens. They will, however, dig and they will climb to get at poultry, so a netting might have to be put over the top of the pen. The bottom of the mesh must be buried at least twelve inches under ground to keep them from digging under it.

Electric fences can keep foxes out. A three wire electric fence with energized strands at six, twelve, and eighteen inches above the ground works well.

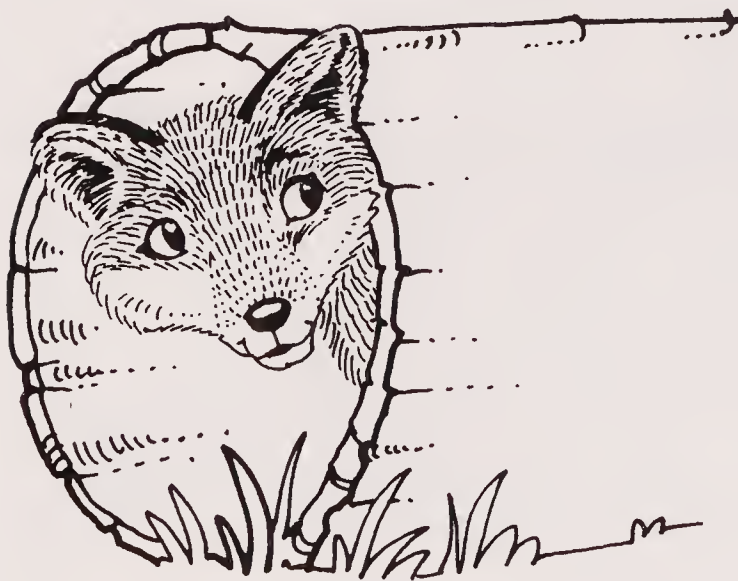
### **Scarin' 'em Away**

Like with some other species, these are only a temporary solution to keep pesky foxes away. They figure things out pretty quickly.

### **Kickin' 'em Out**

Foxes are a long-bodied animal, so cage traps must be long. Traps ranging in size from 12" x 12" x 36" to 15" x 15" x 48" should be used. Cage traps set to catch foxes must be well hidden, and extra care must be taken to keep human scent off the trap and away from the set. Handle cage traps for foxes with clean hands and gloves.

And, everything you do at the cage trap set should also be done with gloves.



Most baits, particularly whole animal carcasses such as chickens or rabbits will attract foxes.

There are commercial lures that work well.

One habit foxes have that you can use to your advantage is their habit of burying or "caching" food so they can eat it later.

To put this habit to use you can dig a hole about six inches in diameter and about ten inches deep. Partially bury some slightly spoiled meat in the hole, being certain to leave a little bit of it exposed. Put a bit of commercial

fox lure into the hole, set the trap over the hole so the rear of the trap covers the hole, and hope you can entice the fox into the trap to look down in the hole at the bait. When he does, you've got him! Congratulate your-self on that catch; there aren't a whole lot of folks as smart as a fox.

It's an understatement to say that foxes are a challenge to catch in cage traps. They are smart, and they're always suspicious. Pre-baiting may help, but so does a whole lot of patience.

It cannot be overemphasized how important it is to leave as little of your scent as possible on the trap and at the



set. The best way to do this is to use gloves with everything you touch. Let Ol' Mr. Fox get a good whiff of you, and he's gone.



## Ground Squirrels

The thirteen-lined ground squirrel (ground squirrel for short) is a small rodent, weighing in at only about nine ounces and measuring up to seven inches in length, not counting his tail.

These little critters are a tan to brown color with a whitish belly. They have thirteen light and dark colored rows of stripes and spots running lengthwise down their back.

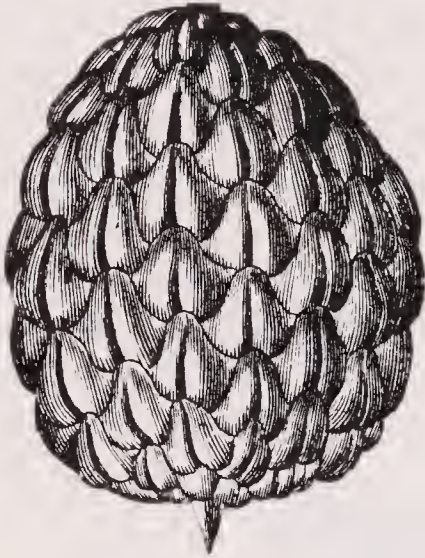


Ground squirrels like grassy areas and open fields, but they don't go for tall grass at all. They are strictly diurnal and are most active on sunny days.

A true hibernator, they enter their burrow for the winter in October and come out again in March or April. They don't form colonies, but populations can become locally dense with average populations being two to eight per acre.

The home of a ground squirrel in a burrow having an entrance two to four inches in diameter and going fifteen to twenty feet down into the ground. For some reason, ground squirrels like to dig their burrows near gravel roads.

They eat a variety of seeds, insects, and some plants.



Ground squirrels are usually seen as they busily scurry about their daily chores.

They are fast runners, and they are often seen standing upright on their hind legs next to their burrows. Sometimes the first sign of the

ground squirrel is the damage he causes.

Ground squirrels are notorious for damaging garden and agricultural crops. They'll dig up planted seeds and eat them, and they'll clip off tender young growing plants to gobble down. They wipe out all of the seeds in an ever-widening circle around their burrows.

### **Shuttin' 'em Out**

It's not the most economical and maybe not even the most effective means of control, but squirrel-proof fences can be built around small areas like gardens and sweetcorn patches. The fence should be made of hardware cloth of one-half inch mesh or smaller, or even tin. Bury the fence at least twelve inches in the ground and keep it no less than two feet above the ground.

### **Messin' with their turf**

Cultivation in crop fields destroys their burrows and makes enough of a hassle for these little critters that

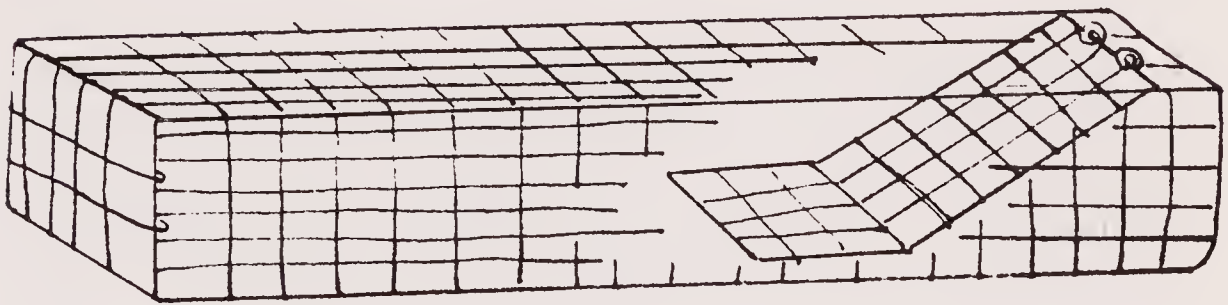
they'll often move on.

### **Scarin' 'em Away**

You can drown 'em out by sticking a garden hose down their burrow and soaking them down good.

### **Kickin' 'em Out**

A simple burrow entrance cage trap can be made at home that does a good job of corralling these furry little pests. The trap is made from a 12 x 20 inch piece of one-half inch hardware cloth that's folded into a 3 x 3 x 20 inch tube.



One end of the tube is completely sealed off, and the other is equipped with a one-way door made from a 2-3/4" by 8" piece of hardware cloth. Gravity keeps this door shut.

Set the trap by wedging the door end tightly against the burrow with the other end sticking straight up into the air. The squirrel will run out of its burrow and push itself through the gravity door and into the trap.

When moving the captured ground squirrel to a new location, be certain to handle the cage and squirrel with leather gloves unless you have some sort of preference for bleeding. Those little suckers can bite something terrible for their size.

Various toxicants and fumigants will do their stuff on ground squirrels. Commercial gas cartridges are available from garden supply houses or hardware stores. Put



the cartridge up to the burrow entrance so the gas goes into the burrow.

If you put a tube from your car exhaust up to that burrow, you can give that little bugger about enough car exhaust in ten minutes to last him a lifetime.

Poison peanuts and grains will work also. Get that stuff back as far as you can in the burrow so you don't end up doing in a neighbor's pet or kid.

## VANDALS

At least we have laws to protect us from humans who tromp on our property uninvited just for the heck of it.

But what about those blasted critters? They can be just as bad, if not worse!

If they were not such delinquents, we probably wouldn't mind having beavers, and voles around.

## Beavers

Those miscreants seem to enjoy attacking trees; totally innocent and defenseless trees! These guys compete with the copy machine for the number of trees they kill every year. Either they gird the tree so it dies a slow, lingering death, or in the case of the beaver, they'll cut the whole thing down, and either drop it in the water or put it right in our way. They are a lot like a spoiled-rotten two-year-old kid.



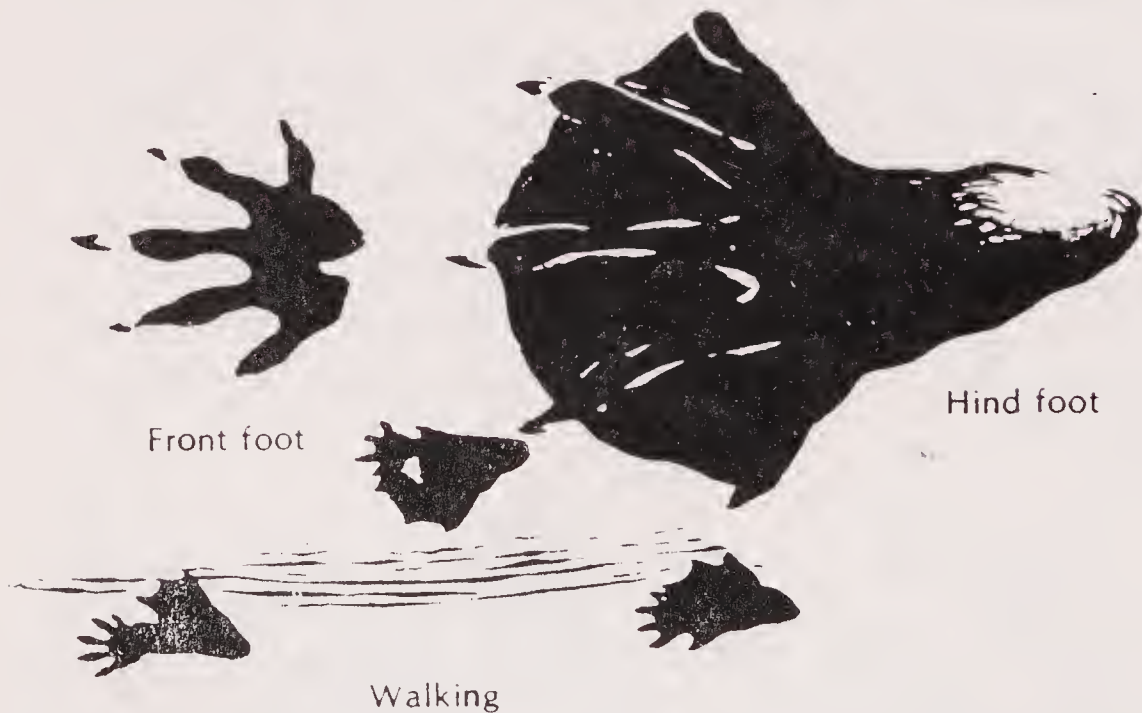
Adult beavers will weigh in from 35 to 50 pounds. They are a stocky animal, well-suited to living in the water. Their hind feet are large and webbed, and they have that distinctive scaled and flat tail.

These fellows live anywhere there is a year-round source

of water. Any stream, lake, pond, ditch, swamp, river, or wetland can be home-sweet-home to those toothy critters.

Usually, they'll set up housekeeping near a good supply of young trees such as willow or aspen. And, they don't mind at all living around humans. The feeling is not mutual.

Beavers seem to be stimulated by running water. When they move into an area, they will quickly make it to their liking by building dams from surrounding trees and vegetation. The homes are large burrows in the banks of their watery abodes, or prominent "huts" which they build from trees, branches, vegetation, and mud. Both their burrows and their huts have underwater entrances.



Beavers store food for the winter months by piling large masses of tree limbs in the water. These are called feed beds. When the pond ices over in the winter, they swim from their living quarters to the feed beds to get their food. They eat leaves, twigs, and bark of woody plants growing near the water.

If you can't see beaver activity, you're just not looking. The prominent dams, hutches, and slides are sure signs of an active beaver colony. The slides are usually about a foot wide and have a slicked-down, or muddy appearance.



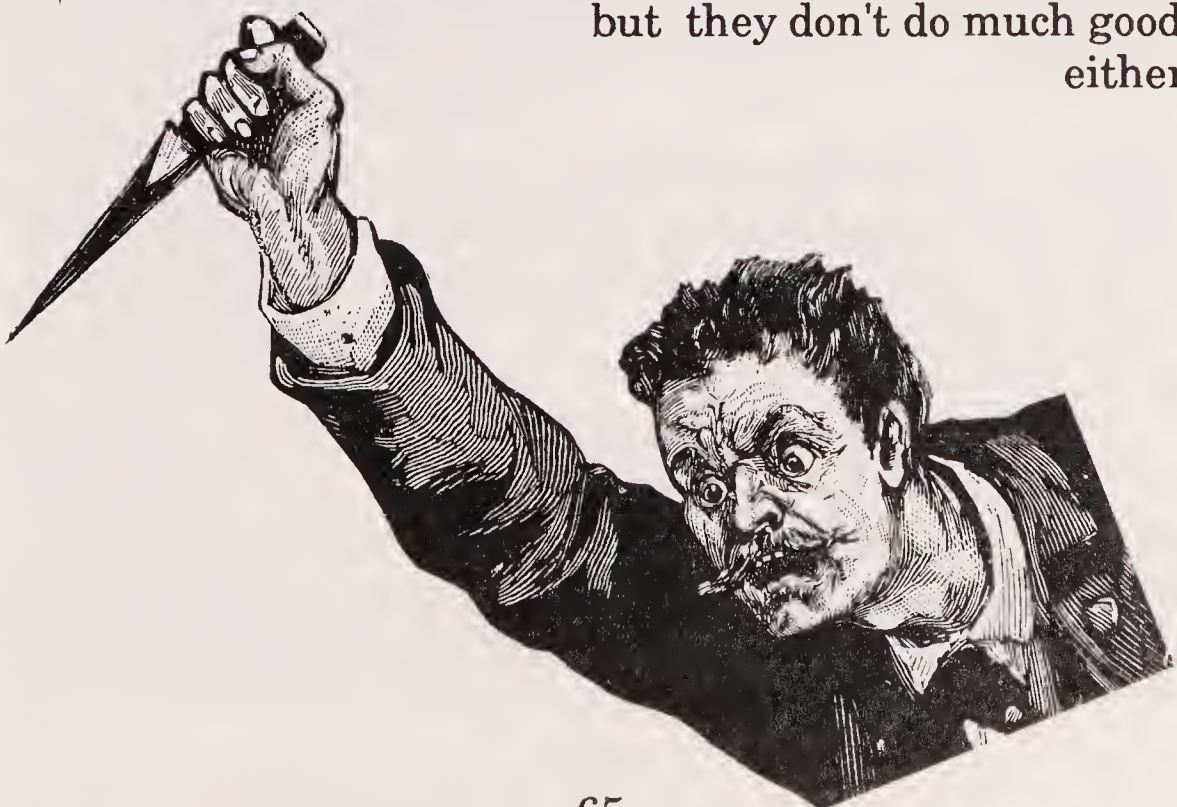
Another sure sign of beaver activity is the abundance of felled trees with their pointed stumps from one to three feet fall.

Pesky beavers bring trouble with their dam building, bank burrowing, tree cutting, and flooding activities. One colony of beavers can cause an astounding amount of damage. Dammed culverts, drain pipes, and such cause floods. The huge bank burrows of beavers cause levees, stream banks, and earthen dams to collapse.

### Shuttin' 'em Out

Some folks have been able to keep beavers out of areas by using metal or wire fences. The mesh must have openings no more than four inches by four inches and have to be buried at least six inches in the ground so beavers can't push under it. It will have to be at least 36 inches high. A single-wire electric fence located ten to twelve inches off the ground may also work on these \$#%^&\* critters.

Beavers can be kept from damming culverts and drainage pipes by putting a screen or wire cover over the ends. But be warned, that doesn't always work. Fits of anger and temper tantrums have been tried by thousands of folks, but they don't do much good, either.



## Scarin' 'em Away

Beavers are not easy to scare away. The harder you try to aggravate them, the harder they try to aggravate you.

It might work to try and prevent their setting up house-keeping by wrapping trees with a protective shield of tin or hardware cloth from the ground up at least four feet.

A repellent that may work is a nasty concoction consisting of one tablespoon of hot pepper sauce in a gallon of water. Spray or paint this mixture on the base of the tree trunks. This might discourage them enough to make them leave.



The basic problem is that fate has dealt the beaver a better hand when it comes to dueling with humans. They have 120 mph teeth and 36-hour days to redo what the human undoes.

## Messin' with their Turf

A couple of methods that can make an area uninviting are to take away their food, and to riprap the banks of the body of water to a depth of at least three feet. These tac-



tics might work, and they might not.

### Kickin' 'em Out

You'll need to use a little different trapping technique for pesky beavers. The sets will be in the water and should have four to six inches of water over the top of the trap. Beavers are wary, and human scent scares them. You should wear waders and do your work from the water, so you don't disturb the banks with footprints.

Beavers are really strong. Their first instinct, when caught, is to try to dive for deeper water. So tie that trap down well.

Two good cage trap set locations for beaver are at the bottom of slides and paths where beavers get into or come out of the water and at the spillway of the dam. Be sure to pick a slide that is being used. You'll know those because it will have a slicked down or wet appearance. Beavers check the spillway of their dam daily; traps set there should be on the top or crest of the dam, not at the bottom.



Beavers can be enticed with bait. Good bait is tender young green shoots or willow, cottonwood, or aspen trees that are about the diameter of a person's thumb. For a bait set, select a spot with a sloping bank of 20 to 45 degrees, and find a place with the correct water depth. Set the trap up against the shore, and on the shore put a dozen fresh green branches of about one inch in diameter. Nick the branches up a little with a knife. This makes it look like another beaver had started a feeding area and had left a tasty treat for some hungry beaver to feast



on. A good dose of commercial beaver lure put among the branches helps. Few beavers will have the strength of character necessary to pass by that tasty morsel all garnished with lure.



Remember, conventional cage traps will not work for beaver. You must use the "clam" type such as the Bailey or Handcock live beaver traps. Be careful when setting these traps; they are quite powerful. If something goes wrong, your plans for the weekend are sure to be ruined!



## Voles

Voles are compact, mouse-sized animals with very stocky bodies, short legs and a short tail. They are often confused with mice. These little critters are brown or gray and have small eyes and ears.



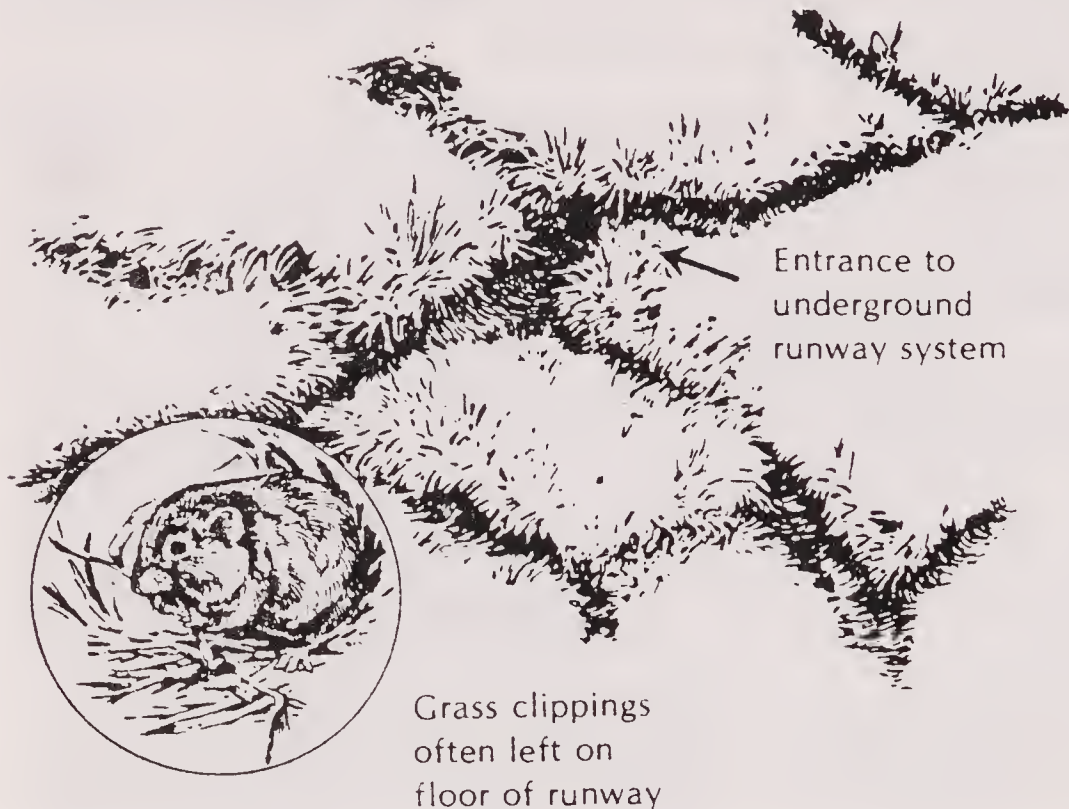
The fact that voles are not well-known or talked about does not make the damage they cause any cheaper or less frustrating.

These little suckers like to live in an area with heavy grasses, grass-like plants, or litter. Instead of hibernating through the winter like decent folks, these animals stay up all winter so they can munch down on your plant bulbs and ornamental trees.

Usually there are ten to a hundred of these animals per acre, but they can get up to as many as a thousand. Apparently, a little family counseling wouldn't do any harm for voles. I don't understand it either. I've kind of sized-up

a lady vole a time or two and didn't think they were all that good-looking.

Small and secretive, the vole will leave little sign. The surface system of runways used by a local vole population may be found in the grass.



An entrance to the underground burrow, about two inches in diameter will be the clue. But, sometimes, the only sign confirming the presence of voles is damage to trees and woody plants.

Voles damage vegetables and crops when they eat the plants, the seeds or the bulbs. They also damage fruit and ornamental trees by gnawing the bark, often girdling the tree. Their teeth marks are small and will be found near the base of the plant. Gnawing damage by rabbits, squirrels, and other animals will be up high and be larger.

### Shuttin' 'em Out

These critters can be kept away from trees by using a metal tree wrap or sleeve around the tree. The wrap will



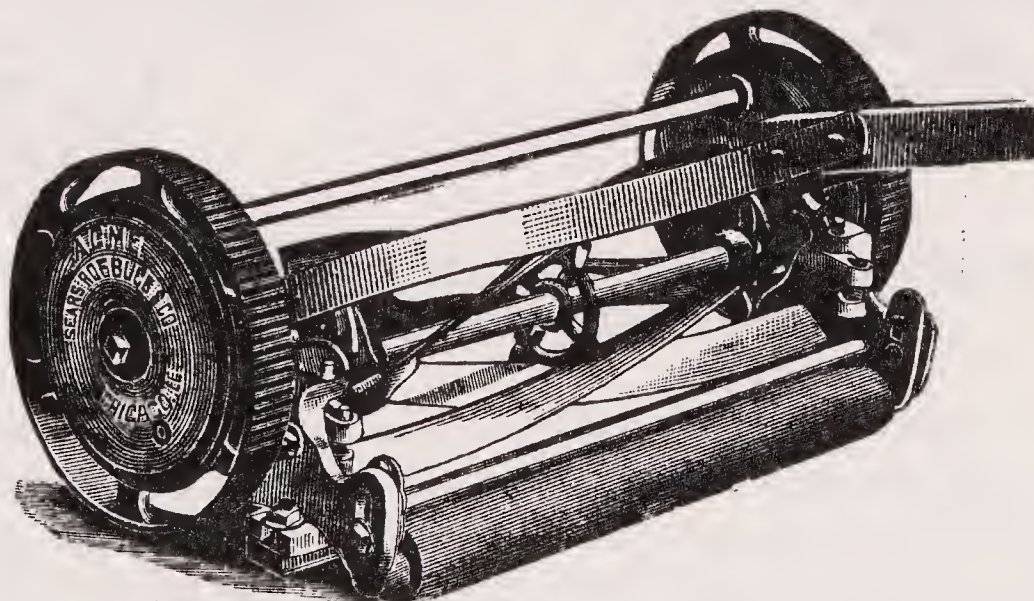
need to be buried at least six inches in the ground. One-quarter-inch hardware cloth and plastic drainage tile works well for this. A barrier fence around gardens and flowerbeds will keep them out.

### **Scarin' 'em Out**

Voles can be kept from bothering flower bulbs and seeds by soaking them in commercially made repellents that contain the chemical Thiram or even a hot sauce food ingredient such as tabasco sauce.

### **Messin' with their Turf**

A clean border several feet wide, all the way around gardens, orchards, and flowerbeds will discourage these little suckers from munching down at your expense. They don't venture far from their runways to get food; and if



the grass is kept mowed well or the ground plowed up move on to greener pastures.

### **Kickin' 'em Out**

You can catch voles in small cage traps such as the Sherman trap. A good bait is a mix of peanut butter and oatmeal. That fact, of course, leads one to believe there is an evolutionary link between voles and junior high students, voles, of course being farther along the scale.

Put the traps right in the runway; there's where you have the best chance of capturing these pests.

You probably won't win all the way with traps. Round #2 can be poison peanut bait containing zinc phosphate or anticoagulants. You can broadcast toxic baits in large areas where you have the problem badly, or you can put them directly in the runways and tunnels.

Always keep in mind that when you get to pitching poisons around you might well get the wrong guy with them. Be careful!

## SCOUNDRELS

Here's a group of really baaaad guys that just don't know where to get off. These guys will do anything and everything, mostly just to be annoying. But, they can easily go beyond annoying to being downright expensive.

The raccoon, for example, is one of the scoundrelist of the scoundrels. This bandit will live in your attic, your chimney, or your barn. He'll get into your garbage, eat your sweet corn, and throttle your poultry.



Then, just for the fun of it, they'll tear a few boards off your house to get in. Nice guys they are not!

While the raccoon can set the pace, there are other scoundrels that all try for second place. These include dogs, cats, muskrats, opossums, skunks, tree squirrels, and woodchucks. Probably half of all the troubles caused by animals can be laid at the doorsteps of this bunch.

### Dogs and Cats

Free-roaming cats are one of the leading killers of song birds. Dogs cost sheep ranchers all across the United States millions of dollars by killing and mutilating sheep. Both these critters get into garbage, dig up lawns, and hassle pets that belong to responsible people.



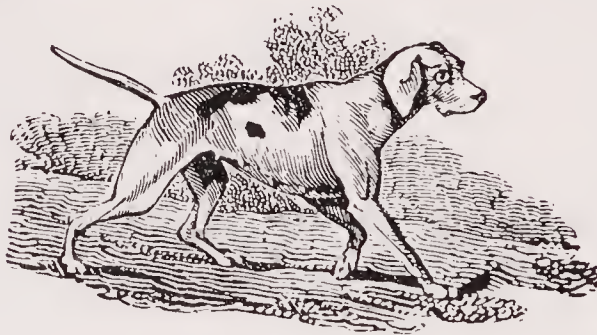
## Shuttin' 'em Out

By far the best way to deal with dog or cat pests is to chat with the owner, if you can figure out who it is. You are probably dealing with what is considered to be an "innocent" pet, so be ready to find the owner pretty defensive.

You can keep dogs out of yards and away from livestock only by fencing. Dogs and cats can be kept out of garbage by putting a good lid on the container. And, keeping doors shut will go a long way to keeping them out of buildings, of course.

## Kickin' 'em Out

Dogs and cats are both easy to catch in cage traps. Since they're both carnivores, raw fish works well for cats and raw liver for dogs.



Since both these pests live close to man, they tend not to be afraid, so the traps rarely have to be hidden.

Cage traps for cats should be in the size range of 10" x 12" x 30" to 12" x 12" x 36". Both single- and double-door cage traps work well.

For dogs, the trap might have to be as large as 20" x 28" x 72" since dogs can get to be pretty large animals.

Keep in mind that Fido or Tabby can get downright nasty when trapped.

## Muskrat

The muskrat is a large rodent, well-adapted to living in and near the water. Any pond, stream, lake, marsh, canal, roadside ditch, swamp, minepit, or any other wet area is tailor made for the muskrat.

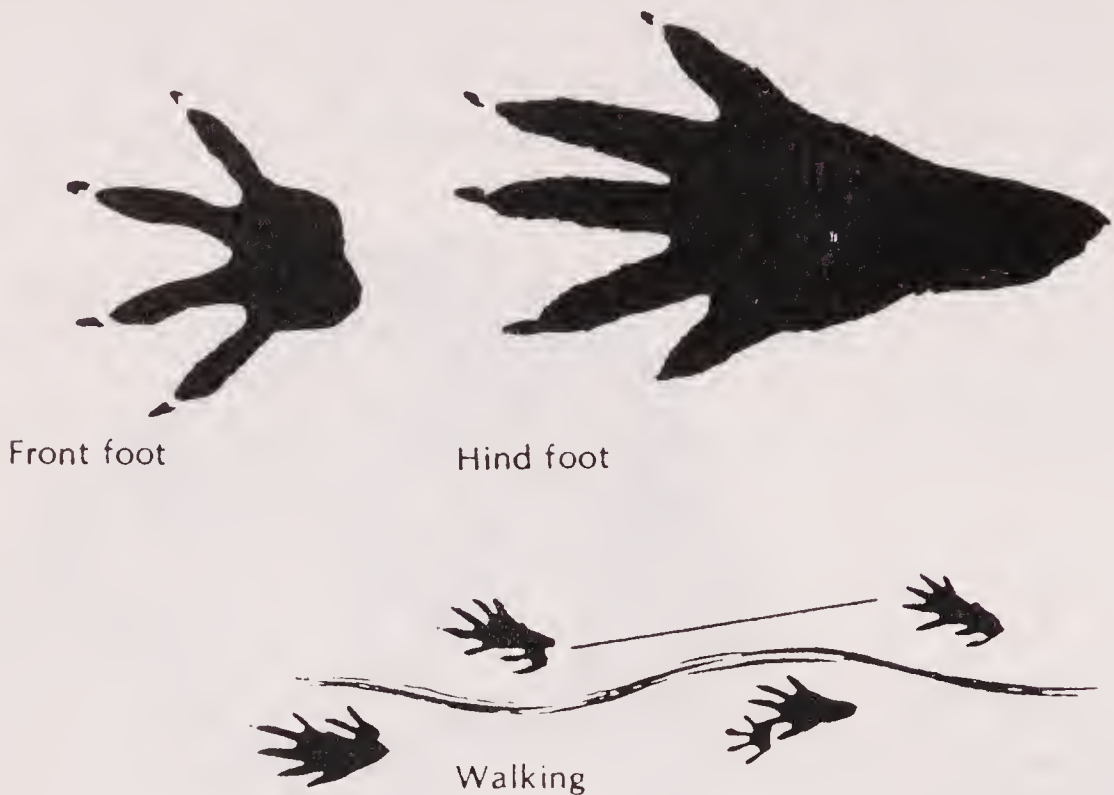


Muskrats are nocturnal, even though you will often see them swimming around during the day. And, where you see one of them, you can bet your grocery money, there will be others nearby. They will, in fact, sometimes run over a hundred in just a couple acres of water.

In shallow water with plenty of vegetation, muskrats will build and live in conical houses called huts. Or, they'll dig bank dens that have an underwater entrance.

The most noticable sign muskrats leave are the narrow trails or "slides" that lead from the water's edge up over the banks. These slides are about the width of a hand, and have a slicked-down appearance from the muskrats sliding down them on their bellies.

The burrowing habits of muskrats is one way they mess things up for us. More than one dam or levee has bitten the dust due to those critters burrowing it full of holes.



Not content with that, the muskrat will gleefully gnaw away on marinas, docks, and boathouses.

### **Messin' with their Turf**

You have to really mess up their watery home in order to get them where they live. You can lay riprap along banks, all the way down to about two feet under the water. This will foul up their efforts to build dens.

### **Kickin' 'em Out**

Some good cage trap locations are at the edge of the water or up on one of their slides. Hide the trap in the grass, use some corn, carrots or apples for bait, and pitch in some lure.

Use an 8" x 8" x 24" inch single-door trap or a 8" x 8" x 30" double-door trap.



## Raccoon

As I mentioned earlier, this is the numero uno of the scoundrels.

They are distinctively marked with a prominent black mask over their eyes and a heavily furred, ringed tail. They tend from salt and pepper grey to black.

These sneaky critters are nocturnal. They have a couple things about them that gets them into lots and lots of trouble. First, they are curious, and second ..... they have an appetite that won't quit.



In the wild, raccoons tend to eat nuts, berries, corn and carrion plus anything they can catch. Some of their favorites are fish and eggs. In the cities, their delicate palate turns to garbage plus anything we don't want them to eat.

One thing a raccoon doesn't have is fear. They sometimes seem to hardly even notice people.

Raccoons like to set up housekeeping in barns, other out-buildings, storm sewers, hollow trees, ground burrows, and rock crevices. And, where one lives, others will, too. They are a very social animal.

Don't let their cuddly look fool you. You get one of those honkers cornered and you'll know what it means to really be in trouble. They can hurt, and hurt badly, on all five corners.

The tracks of the raccoon are very distinct. They resemble the hand and foot prints of humans. (That is, they do if the human in question has toes long enough to play a piano.) Look for these tracks in muddy areas or along trails that you know are being used by masked bandits.



Usually the best way to know they've been around is to look for a mess. If there's a mess waiting for you in the morning where it was all ship-shape the night before, you gotcha a raccoon on your hands.

Garden and truck crops, particularly sweet corn, are favorite foods of the raccoon. You can tell a raccoon is the culprit eating your sweet corn because they will ruin practically all of it and leave many partially eaten ears with the husks pulled back.

Another way to tell if the culprit is a raccoon is its timing. Raccoons have an uncanny sense of exactly when you plan on harvesting the stuff yourself. What they will do, then, is to harvest it the night before.

Raccoons love watermelons. Those rascals will dig a small hole in the melon and then hollow it out by raking the contents out with their little paws.

When raccoons raid a poultry pen, they leave a tell tale sign. They have the charming little habit of biting the head off one of your feathery friends and leaving it some



distance from the body. Those boys are not only a little bit sicko, but they play rougher than all get out.

As if to rub it in, they are also more than willing to leave their calling card among the eggs they lay waste to. They will break the shell so that the break is the long ways of the egg. Raccoons will not only break open whatever eggs they want to eat, but the rest of them, too...just for kicks.

### Shuttin' 'em Out

Raccoons are big enough that the hole they use to get in and out of buildings will be noticed. So, it isn't hard to find where they're getting in. All you have to do is to nail the hole shut. But, don't do it while they are nursing their young for two good reasons. One is that it isn't fair to the babies to cause them to starve. The other reason, Mama might well make a whole lot bigger hole in an effort to get back in to her rug rats.

It isn't real clear why anyone would want to live in a chimney, but raccoons do. You can solve that problem by putting a cap of some kind over the top of the chimney.



Be sure the raccoon is out of the chimney before you cap it, or you are going to end up with either a dead, smelly raccoon in the chimney, or a masked bandit running around the house. Don't think you're going to be clever and smoke it out by lighting a fire in the fireplace or stove. You could kill the animal right there in the chimney.



If you end up with a raccoon finding its way into your house, use your head. Simply open the doors of the house and let him find his way out at his own speed.

If you try to chase it out, the havoc that will occur with the animal chasing about within the house will leave you shocked how much damage a running-scared raccoon can do. And, if one of them in their panic, turns on one of your kids, you're going to have one of the most chewed-on, gouged-over, and gnawed-up kids in town.

If you're thinking you're going to fence a raccoon in or out of anything, you have another think coming. They are far too agile and far too smart for that. If it makes you feel any better, you can build an electric fence. A single strand



of hot wire six inches off the ground around your prize veggies may slow down a few of the raccoons. Two hot wires, one at six inches and one at twelve inches are even better. But, don't get your hopes up.

The best way to keep those critters out of your garbage is a good, tight-fitting cover on the can held down with a cement block or two.

## Scarin' 'em Away

You can scare coons away, but this is only a temporary answer. Those little suckers will often call your bluff and get right back to their old pesky habits.

Tying a dog near the garden or sweet corn patch may put the fear of God into them. A radio may do the trick and certainly is a workable system to keep them out of attics. Of course, such a ploy will keep you awake all night, also.

Pie tins, plastic and cloth streamers, and tin can lids tied so they blow in the wind may help for a short time.

Strong odors such as ammonia, naphthalene, moth balls, etc. will offend the sensitive noses of raccoons. Ammonia in a chimney or in the bottom of a garbage can can help keep coons out.

With rare exception, it is hard to find a permanent way to keep coons on the run.



One solution might be for you to develop a taste for roast raccoon.

### Kickin' 'em Out

Cage trapping of raccoons works great.

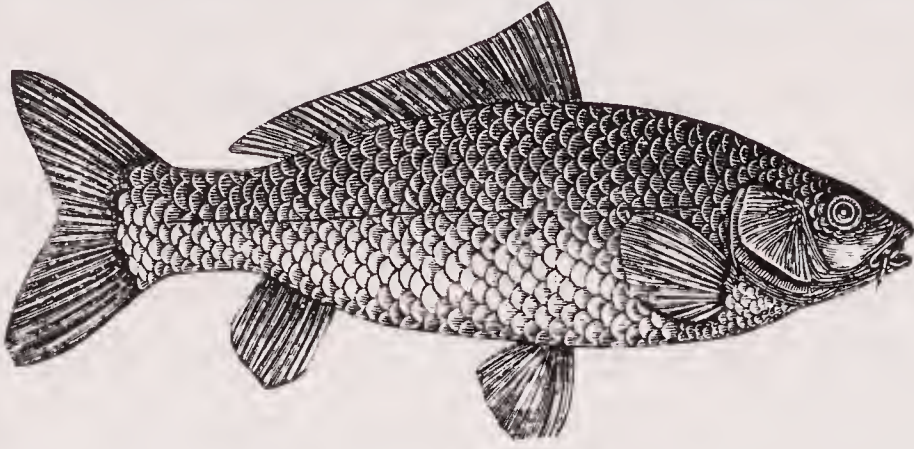
Single door cage traps in the size range of from 10" x 12" x 30" to 15" x 15" x 36" work best. Raccoons are really strong so sometimes they can end up doing a number on a trap so be sure the trap is in good shape, properly secured and get the critter out as soon as possible before he has time to wreck the place.

It's also a good idea to use cage traps that have some extra small mesh around the bait area of the trap. If



traps don't have this, raccoons will reach through from the outside and pull the bait out, then get away scot free!

All cage traps set for raccoons must be baited with a good visible and mouth-watering bait. The odor of the bait is important. Use one with a good, strong, sweet odor. Excellent raccoon table fares are such things as fish. Some trappers have good luck with sweet rolls. Eggs are a



good visual attracter. A piece of bread with peanut butter and honey smeared over it works well, especially where you have a neighborhood cat that might find the fish irresistible.

Commercially available baits or lures work well for coons, especially if used in combination with something that looks like munchies. A little oil of anise helps attract raccoons and repels cats.

Set the cage trap along the raccoon's trail or near his living area. If those masked bandits are raiding your sweet corn patch, you can set the trap right between the rows of corn. If the problem is poultry raiding, the trap should be put right along the outside wall of the shed. In barns, hide the trap right in among the hay bales.

Double-door cage traps work for raccoons. These traps need to be at least 12" x 14" x 40" or larger. Use double-door cage traps the same as any other trap. They will also work if put directly in trails that are in tall grass or weeds. Be sure to hide such traps well.



## Opossum

The opossum, the only marsupial in North America, is a whitish or grayish animal about the size of a fat, ugly, house cat, but one with a long, pointed face and rounded, hairless ears.

Opossum can be up to 40 inches long, their hairless tail making up half their body length, and may weigh up to 14 pounds. The average weight, however, is about four to six pounds.

Of that four to six pounds, about three-fourths of it is ugliness and another three-fourths of it is teeth.



Opossum will live in just about any natural habitat, but they prefer wooded areas near streams or swamps. They're good climbers and can often be seen high in a tree or loft.

A really slow-moving animal, the opossum, may do any of several things when approached or cornered. They may bare their teeth, growl, hiss, bite, screech, or expel a smelly fluid. If these all fail, he might suddenly roll over and play dead, the familiar "playing opossum."

Opossums aren't real fussy about where they take up

housekeeping. They might settle down in a tree, some other critter's burrow, a brush pile, in a building, a culvert, or even under your house!

These animals are not afraid of people and are as happy in an urban area as out in the country. They are not above making a smelly mess out of wherever they decide to light.



Opossums are nocturnal. They'll eat almost anything, either meat or fruit or grains. Those living close to humans will eat from compost piles, garbage cans, pet food dishes, grain storage bins, and gardens.

If an opossum becomes a pest, he'll usually be seen without any problem since they are not shy or secretive.

The foot tracks of opossums from both the front and the hind feet look like little hands with widely spread fingers. They are different from those of raccoon tracks that look like little feet.

Opossums get into things, tear things up, and eat things just like raccoons. In fact, they are often the real cause of things blamed on raccoons. Of course, we can't get too wrapped up in trying to assess blame. There is plenty enough blame to go around for all those culprits.

Anything that works for raccoons or skunks will work for opossums, also. Opossums aren't the smartest animals in the woods, but what they lack in brain power, they make up for in will power. They generally do whatever they want to do and wherever they want to go through sheer persistence.

## Kickin' 'em Out

Opossums are not scared of cage traps, so you don't have to worry about hiding the trap very well.

Opossums do not travel long distances, so if you know where they are living, you can set a trap near there.

The same baits, attractors, and methods that work for raccoons and skunks work for the opossum also. Food with a strong odor is great for bait. Slightly spoiled meat, sardines, strong-smelling fish or cheese and rotten eggs all work well. Commercial animal lures work very well, also.

Obviously the opossum doesn't get too upset about being so ugly since he apparently doesn't mind smelling bad on top of it.

Cage traps for the opossum should be in the size range of 10" x 12" x 30" to 12" x 12" x 36". Both single-and double-entrance cage traps work well.

Be careful when handling a caged opossum, for it will bite and snap.



## Skunks

Skunks are members of the weasel family. The most common model is the striped skunk. It has a prominent lateral stripe or stripes down its coat of black fur.



Spotted skunks are smaller and look more like a weasel. They are easy to recognize from their white spots and broken white stripes in a dense black fur.



All skunks have short, stocky legs and large feet equipped with long claws. Those claws make these critters really good at digging. And, it's those digging habits that put the skunk on the wrong side of people. That is, that's one thing that it does; we all know what the other thing is about skunks that we find so offensive. Skunks can afford to be kind of docile and slow of foot. If you smelled as bad as they can, you'd feel free to come and go at your own speed, too.

Like opossums, skunks are not really fussy about where they live. They might hang out in an old hollow log or a burrow. They might take up residence in old buildings, board piles, junk piles, and in culverts.



hind



front

Skunks eat both plants and animals, but they like meat the better of the two. Insects such as grasshoppers, beetles and crickets are some of their favorites, so skunks might not be such bad guys, after all.

Like raccoons, skunks also have a sweet tooth for honey and can't pass anything up that has a pungent odor.

Skunks are primarily nocturnal. Be very very careful of any skunk you see moving around in the daylight hours. Good healthy skunks are off somewhere in bed, so that wandering-around- one you see during the day might well be one sicko skunk. And, a lot of what skunks have, humans can get.

Just the mere presence of a skunk is enough to upset lots of folks. If their smell doesn't get to you, their incessant and destructive digging will. They love to dig holes in lawns, golf courses, and gardens as they search for tasty insect larvae just under the ground. And, it seems that



for some reason, they prefer the larvae that live under something really, really expensive.

Those critters will burrow under buildings or get in through openings in foundations. They'll break into bee hives to eat the honey and raid poultry pens to get the eggs. Eggs eaten by skunks are usually opened on one end, and the edges of the shell are crushed inward. Garbage is another favorite target of pesky skunks.

### Kickin' 'em Out

When skunks have gotten in the habit of raiding your garbage cans, just put the garbage indoors, or fasten lids on the cans tightly, or weigh them down with something heavy.



You can protect your feathered friends at night by locking them in for their own protection. You can also fix the holes where skunks are getting into the pen.

If skunks are living under your house or other building, you can make a one-way exit using a hinged hardware cloth door that the skunk can push out through but can't get back in through. Or, if you're sure Mr. Skunk is out on an errand, you can put a piece of strong mesh over the entrance. But be sure you do that at night after the skunk has left for his nightly mischief. And, have a heart.... don't wire Mrs. Skunk out from under the build-



ing in May or June when the babies are home alone.

Now and then a skunk will come walking right into the open door of a house. This is one real, real good time to use your head and not hassle the creature. He doesn't like to use his smelly defense any more than necessary, so if you take it easy he won't. Don't try to chase him out; let him wander around a while and he'll find his way out if you have the good sense to leave a door open for him.

### **Scarin' 'em Away**

Noise makers such as radios and other such things often work well to scare skunks away.

Another way is to pester him out of the neighborhood. If you know where he lives, you can shovel the entrance over with dirt. He'll dig his way out (or in) again with no



problem. But if you keep it up day after day, he'll eventually grow tired of your little game and move on to other quarters with more understanding landlords.

### **Messin' with their Turf**

Just simply keeping things polished up will make skunks seriously question hanging around. Patch enough holes in building foundations, store enough garbage goodies inside, and clean up enough board piles and the skunk will leave in disgust.

## Kickin' 'em Out

Skunks aren't afraid of cage traps, so it's not necessary to take a lot of pains to hide them.

Set traps near den entrances, along trails, inside of and under buildings and in areas where they are hassling poultry.

Double-door cage traps work well along trails, or when baited and set as a single-door cage trap should be.

Good bait for skunks would be almost anything edible. Honey, molasses, and peanut butter on a piece of bread makes a good bait. Fish or eggs also work well. If you want to use meat, it is best to let it ripen a bit. Skunks



will like it better then. Skunks have never been accused of being just really fussy eaters.

Cage traps for skunks should be in the size range of 10" x 10" x 24" to 12" x 12" x 36". A few companies make special cage traps for skunk trapping that are made entirely of galvanized sheet metal rather than wire. After you've faithfully read this book, read the directions on the box the trap came in, listened to the wife, and got advice from the whole car pool, you get your skunk in your trap.

Now, what are you going to do? There is old Mr. Skunk, mad as a wet hen, just waiting for you to get close to that trap where he'll let you have it good. Getting a skunk in a wire mesh trap is something like having a tiger by the tail. It ain't holdin' that skunk that's tough. It's letting go

of him that proves to be the problem.

A galvanized sheet trap doesn't keep you from catching a spray now and then, but it does keep you from having to take a direct hit.

If you have a mesh trap and have caught a skunk unintentionally, you can come up very, very carefully and slowly roll the trap over with the help of a long pole. This will work only if the trap has a self-opening door.

These precautions may not work in every situation, so if things go sour, just remember you were warned. Just keep in mind that the squirt can go twenty feet or more. And, contrary to some old wives tales, skunks are not single shots. They are repeaters.

## Squirrels

Tree squirrels spend most of their lives living in the aerial reaches of trees and roof tops. They are expert climbers; the only places they can't get to are those with surfaces too slick to get a grip on.



Genuine acrobats, squirrels are fun to watch. They will attempt daredevil leaps from tree to tree. You'll often see



them hanging upside down from some lofty tree limb, or casually sitting, observing, and taking in the warm sunlight. Walking the tightrope is no problem for tree squirrels since they can easily run along power lines and roof peaks.

In fact, one of the special thrills you can get out of watching squirrels with all their acrobatics is the rare occasion when they stumble. They are so good, that when they do make a mistake, it's fun to watch.

Tree squirrels usually live in hollow trees but can be talked into living in buildings, especially attics. They don't need a large hole to get in, one only a couple of inches in diameter is enough. Squirrels are herbivores and will eat a variety of native foods, but they do adapt quickly to unusual food sources.

One habit of tree squirrels is that of "caching" or hiding supplies of nuts and grains for a winter's food supply. Typically, they'll bury nuts in the ground or build up stock piles of nuts in hollow-out trees.



Tree squirrels are not a bit shy or secretive.

Nor are they a bit shy about digging little holes in your yard for you. Some other signs are their leaf nests and the other damage they do around the place.

Toward fall and winter, many home owners have problems with squirrels getting into attics, and using them for a winter home, or a place to lay in a supply of nuts.

A good way to detect that you've got squirrels in the attic is to hear the pitter patter of little feet and not have any kids around.

Besides stomping around in your attic, chewing off the most expensive plants outside, and digging cute little holes all over the yard, they often add insult to injury by ripping off seeds from the bird feeder. They especially like the larger seeds like sunflower seeds.

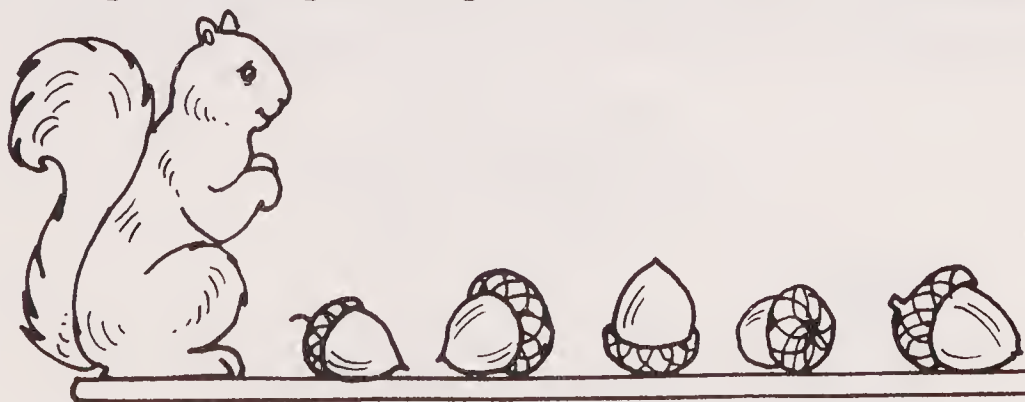
For commercial-strength nastiness, sometimes the little suckers will get into things like transformers and cause power outages. These little charmers have been known to pitch hundreds of thousands of folks all in the dark at the same time.

### Shuttin' 'em Out

It's tough to kick a super athlete out of anywhere, and that's what the squirrel is. He can go just about where he wants to, so you'll find it takes extraordinary effort to keep him from doing just that.

But one thing that can work is a "baffle" around the bottom of the tree or pole a bird feeder is on. You can buy a baffle, or make your own out of sheet metal. They should be at least two feet in diameter and from five to six feet off of the ground.

To keep squirrels from running along wires, you can cover a portion of the wire with pieces of plastic tubing several feet long, and large enough in diameter so the tubing



spins on the wire, dumping said squirrel on his behind. The best part of this little trick is watching the squirrel the first time he unsuspectingly scampers out on that wire.

Squirrels living in an attic can be evicted simply by covering the hole they are using for a doorway. Use metal mesh or sheet metal to cover that hole when you're sure your guests are out.

### **Scarin' 'em Out**

Squirrels are skittish and noise will scare them out of a building or chimney. If noise doesn't work, try some moth balls to drive them out. Farm and garden centers have chemical repellents that will make squirrels shy away from plants treated with the repellents.

### **Messin' with their Turf**

It's a radical treatment, but squirrels can be kept out of an area by cutting down all the trees and hauling them away, or at least any hollow trees.

By the time you get done explaining this to your wife or your landlord, you start getting the picture that the squirrel has done outwitted you.

### **Kickin' 'em Out**

Tree squirrels are not hard to catch in cage traps. You don't have to hide the trap very well, but a good amount of easily seen bait is important. Good baits for squirrels are any kind of nuts, especially pecans and peanuts. Peanut butter on bread works well, as does ear corn.



Single-entrance cage traps in the size of 5" x 5" x 15" to 10" x 10" x 24" are best for tree squirrels. The smaller sizes work for the smaller red squirrels, and the larger



ones work well for their bigger cousins, the fox and the gray squirrels. Double-door cage traps for squirrels should be a minimum of 8" x 8" x 30" in size.



The traps should be set in areas where the little critters are caching or looking for food.





## Woodchuck

The woodchuck is a member of the squirrel family. Other common names are groundhogs, whistle pigs, or simply "chucks".

Their compact and chunky body is supported by short



strong legs, and they have a short-furred tail that is dark brown in color. The woodchuck's forefeet have long and curved claws tailor-made for digging.

They are a grizzled brownish gray and weigh in at about 5 to 10 pounds when full grown.

Woodchucks are a burrowing animal active during the day. Favorite places for their burrows are in fields, pastures, along fence rows, at the base of trees, or around old building foundations.

Often the woodchuck will be out scurrying around in the day, searching for some tender morsel of leafy matter. When not eating, and during the warmest parts of the day, they like to bask in the sun.

Woodchucks are vegetarians, enjoying an unending smorgasbord from the plant life of the world. Favorite foods



are beans, peas, carrot tops, sweet corn, alfalfa, clover and grasses.

Sometimes the first sign that you have woodchucks as neighbors is the damage to the garden or to your fruit and ornamental trees.

In fact, it is when woodchucks get it in their furry little heads to go on a garden-raiding party that the battle lines are drawn. Damage to garden crops can be fast, far, and costly.

### **Shuttin' 'em Out**

If your friendly new neighbor has decided to take up housekeeping in or under a building, often it is simply a matter of plugging up the hole where he's getting in and he'll be history.

Keeping them out of a garden can be a problem. The best answer is a good wire mesh fence, with holes no larger than two inches by four inches. The fence has got to be three or four feet tall, and at least a foot in the ground.

And you can burn their britches with a single hot wire five to six inches off the ground. If you put a single hot wire on the top of an existing fence you can not only keep them from crawling over that fence, but you can have the satisfaction of knowing they got a good jolt just before they fell back to the ground.



## **Scarin' 'em Away**

Woodchucks are shy animals, and a little harassment is sometimes all that it takes to get rid of one that gets to be something of a pest. A radio in the garden or something as simple as a beach ball blowing around the yard may do the job.

Something with an offensive odor such as ammonia or even some gasoline poured down into their den can put the skids under a woodchuck. If, of course, you like to see buildings burn down you can use the gasoline trick to get them out of structures or their foundations. For folks that would rather not see their garage turn into a bonfire, some other procedure might be advised.

## **Messin' with their Turf**

The best way to permanently solve a woodchuck problem is to make things less appealing to them. Woodchucks seem to like living around or in buildings that have brush grown up around them, or that have junk and refuse piled around. Just cleaning up around buildings by cutting brush and grass away will make it less "woodchucky".

## **Kickin' 'em Out**

During the summer, there's a lot of fresh green plants around, so catching woodchucks in cage traps is hard. During the fall, spring and winter, it's a lot easier. A generous shot of fresh peas, carrots with tops, asparagus, apples, or other fresh fruit should be used for bait.

Baited cage traps should be located near the entrance to the burrow. They should be well-hidden, but with the bait as visible as possible. Some cage trappers have had good luck covering the set trap with a tarp to hide the thing and provide an enticing little cranny for the woodchuck to poke his nose into.



Since woodchucks are active during the day, especially early morning and late afternoon, check your sets in the late afternoon or just before darkness. If you can, check the trap in the late morning, too.

Single-door cage traps for the woodchuck should be in the size range of 10" x 10" x 24" to 12" x 12" x 36". Double-door cage traps should be a minimum of 10" x 10" x 30".



## THE LUFFWAFFE

I'll never forget the less-than-kind words I had on one occasion for one of this class of pests.

It was on one fine Sunday afternoon and I was sitting on a friend's deck, adorned in a wide-brimmed cowboy hat, enjoying some brew.



Suddenly ..... SPLAT! I was attacked. Some well-aiming pilot that went cartwheeling off through the skies with the ease of a Messerschmidt had dropped some of its aerial bombs right on my new hat. The characteristic white gooey splatter gave me an ever so slight hint as to what it was.

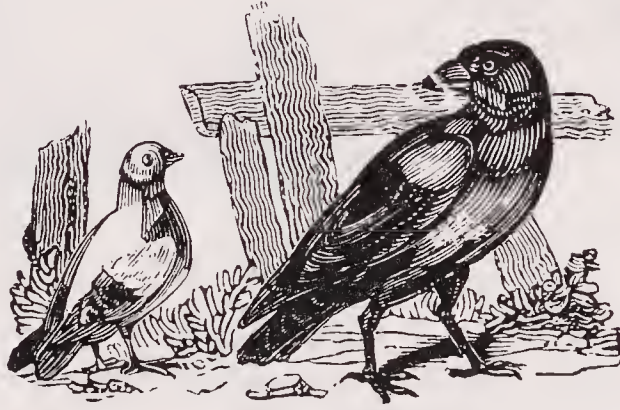
Freshly washed cars are also a favorite target.

The hangers where these critters park themselves are in real good places, too ..... attics, under the eaves of roofs, and little nooks and crannies of buildings.

These guys can drop from the sky, anywhere and anytime, bombard us and rip us off. Then they can get away almost before we can see them.

To combat these forces, otherwise known as bats and birds, you need some special tactics and some special weaponry.

You also need to keep your defense up, for once an invading force is gotten rid of, another is sure to take its place.



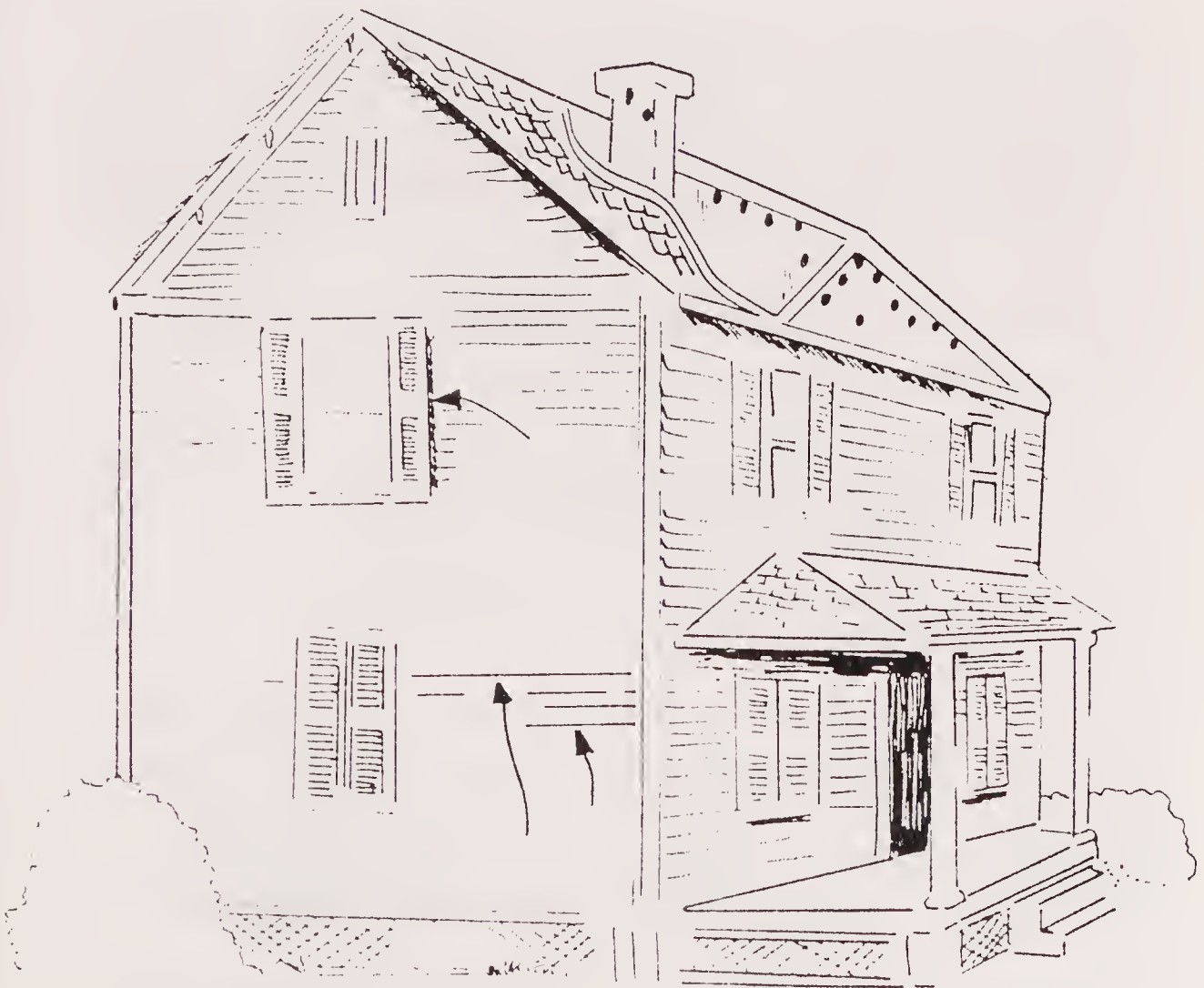
## Bats

Bats are the only mammal that can truly fly. The "flying" squirrel makes that claim, but it just isn't so. A flying squirrel more or less glides down from one place to a lower one.

But, the bat really flies and flies well. They will put most birds to shame with their skills in the air.

Bats spend the day hanging around sleeping ..... much like a girl I went with in college.

While most bats will stay in caves or rock crevices, others will roost behind shaggy tree bark, or in the hollow of a tree. Unfortunately, a few bats seem to like roosting in attics and buildings.





Bats are not conspicuous or noisy animals. The first sign of bats is usually seeing them flying or hanging from rafters in a building. Where bats congregate for the day in attics and other buildings, a pile of bat droppings may show up.

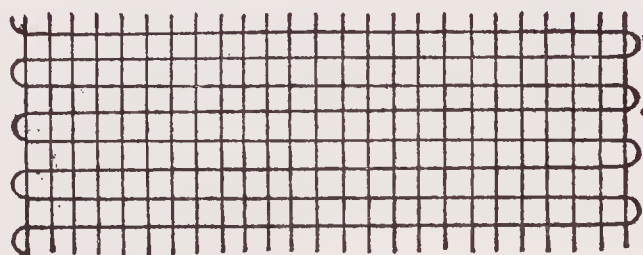
Bats are probably one of the least pesky of all pesky critters. About the worst thing they do is to live rent-free up in the attic.

But, if you're kind of narrow-minded about such things and don't want them around, there are things you can do.

### **Shuttin' 'em Out**

If you don't like bats sharing your home with you, the best thing you can do is to keep them out of the building to start with.

When bats are getting into attics, they are often using such places as attic vents. Or, if they can't find a vent to use as a doorway, they can make do with a crack or a hole as small as a half inch in diameter. Look for cracks under the eaves of a building. Your best defense is sealing every opening with caulking or by putting a screen over the hole. When you're doing all that, be sure to do it after they've taken off for work in the early evening.



One way to keep bats out is to put some sort of one-way door over the opening so bats leaving through the opening can't get back in. One-way exits are easy to make. Simply use a funnel made from screen, or just hinge a piece of screen over the opening the critters are using.

The most common bat problem is someone finding a bat

in the living room, kitchen or some other part of the house. The critter had probably gotten in through some door or window that was left open or came down the attic access hole. When a bat finds himself in such a situation, he'll hunt down a curtain or some such thing to hang from.

These bats are no real problem. All you have to do is to leave a door open and wait for dusk. Come feeding time, that old bat will yawn and scratch a minute, then take off looking for that open door. It won't take him long to find it and then he'll be gone.

An alternative to doing that is to bomb around the house, broom in hand, chasing him from one room to the other. It is amazing how much stuff you break doing it that way.

If a bat finds himself having fallen to the floor, he often won't be able to get airborne again. All you have to do under these circumstances is to put on a heavy pair of gloves and pitch a towel on said bat. Scoop him up in the towel, and then take him outside where you can throw him up in the air. He'll be able to handle it from there.

### **Scarin' 'em Away**

Bats are pretty much loners who don't like to be messed with. To get them out of an attic, sometimes all you have to do is to turn a fan on them. They don't like the wind.



Leaving a lamp on up there  
will go a long ways toward  
discouraging them, as will a  
radio.

Moth balls or moth flakes  
hung in a little cloth bag will  
send bats apartment hunting  
about as fast as anything else.

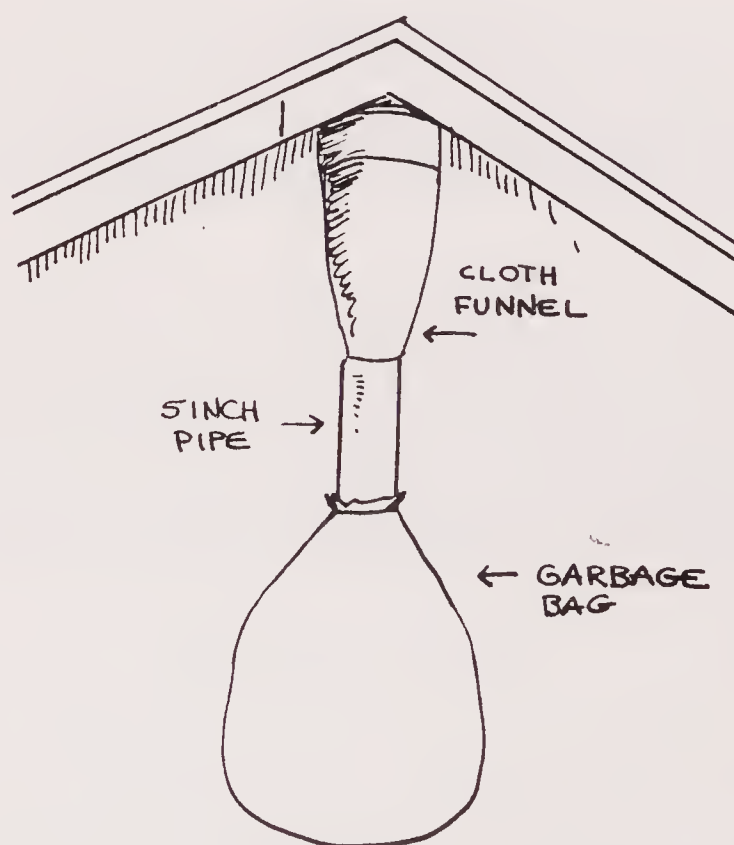
If you use moth balls or flakes, be sure to climb up there

in the attic and replenish the contents of that bag now and then. About the time you've forgotten about your bat problem, that stuff will be all evaporated and you'll have to start over again.

## Kickin' 'em Out

It's far better to keep bats out than it is to kick them out once they've moved in. But once you have them, and you don't want them, there are answers.

One easy live trap you can build is made by fashioning a



An effective bat trap can be easily made from readily available materials.

cloth funnel that empties through a five-inch pipe into a garbage bag.

The trap works on the principle that bats must free fall for a short distance before they can begin to fly. By putting this trap outside of openings bats are using, the bat will fall into it when he leaves to feed. The steel pipe is too slippery for him to grab hold of once he falls in. So, he can't get back out.



It's real handy to move bats you get in these traps simply by taking bag and all to where you want to turn 'em 'loose.

It's a good idea to turn any such captives loose in a nice wooded area instead of where they might decide to take up housekeeping in someone else's house.





## Birds

Birds can be pretty great critters, but they are not above being pests, too. Those among them that are trouble-makers do such things to irritate us as making messes on things, stealing from our gardens, carrying diseases and building their nests in some of the most inconvenient places.

The three most wanted of the bird pests are the house sparrow, the pigeon, and the starling.

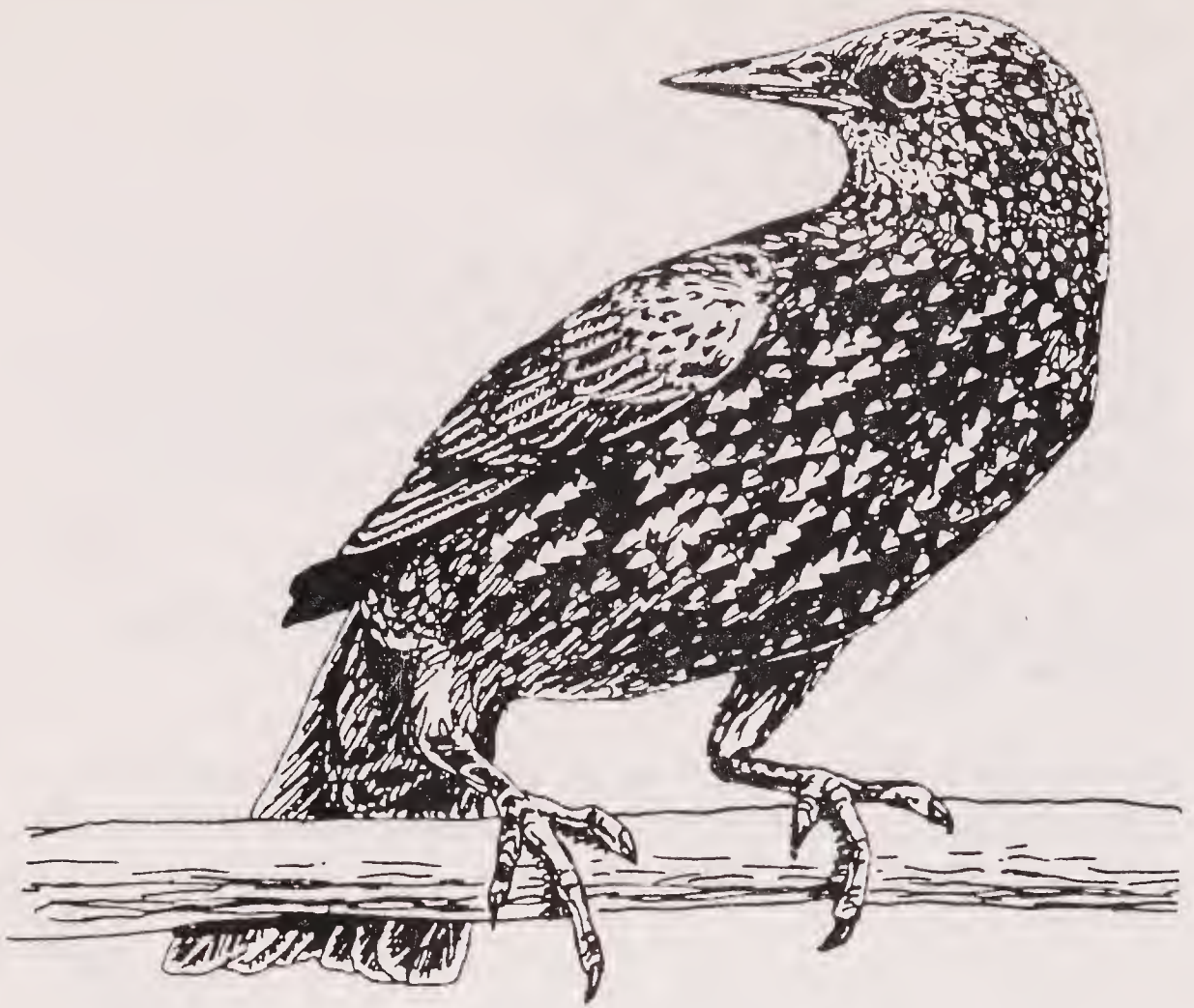
Some others that aren't as bad, but still do things to us we don't like are the crow, the blackbird, some waterfowl, and even those cute woodpeckers.



*House Sparrow*

If you're going to win in any conflict with birds, you need to be ready for a long, drawn-out affair. It will be more in the nature of a low-key war than it will a battle. Since birds are so mobile, nothing works forever. Once some local population is convinced not to hang around any more, a niche is made that other birds immediately fill in. Not only does nothing work forever, but no one single tactic will do the job. To come out on top, a combination of methods should be used.





*Starling*

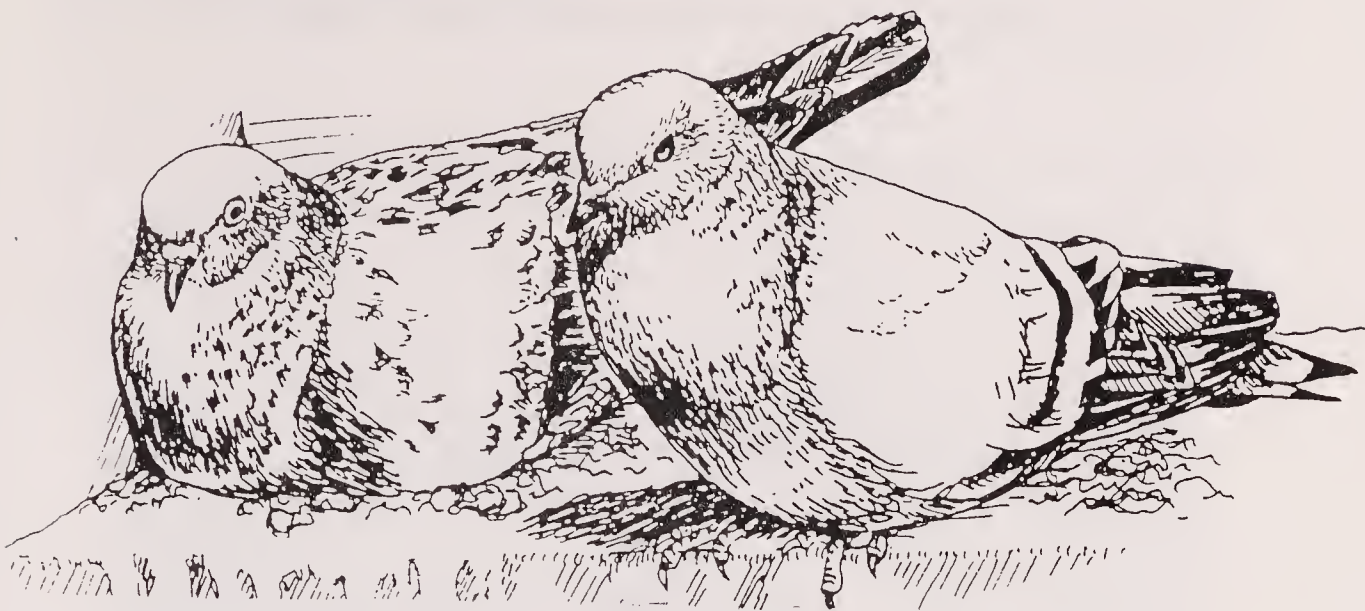
The best way of controlling these flying pests is to do what's necessary to keep them from having the chance to become pests. Some simple kickin'-'em-out tactics are nothing more than good housekeeping such as closing openings in buildings and keeping doors closed to keep any bird from getting in.

Often times sparrows will build their nests in bird houses reserved for song birds. If it will work, simply put a narrow opening in the bird house. Sparrows can't use bird houses that have openings of less than 1-1/8 inch in diameter.

Netting can be used to keep birds away from fruit and berry trees and out of building rafters.

Pigeons need a flat surface to roost on. If their favorite perch can be fixed so it slopes at 45 degrees or more,

those pesky birds will fall on their duffs. Pigeons don't like to fall on their duffs.



*Pigeons*

Woodpeckers sometimes get into the habit of coming back to the same tree or building to peck at the wood. Actually, they may be doing the property owner a favor. If it's a building they attack, this usually means there are bugs in there that the woodpecker is after. Take care of the bug problem with some sort of insecticide or treatment, and you'll take care of the woodpecker problem. Another way to solve such a problem is to cover the area with sheet metal. Let some woodpecker work over a piece of sheet metal for a while, and he's going to have a world-class headache.

Chimney swifts build nests on the inside walls of chimneys. This can really screw things up, even cause toxic gas buildup in the building that can be fatal to people.

The answer to this is to get rid of the nests, then cover the top of the chimney with a wire cap.

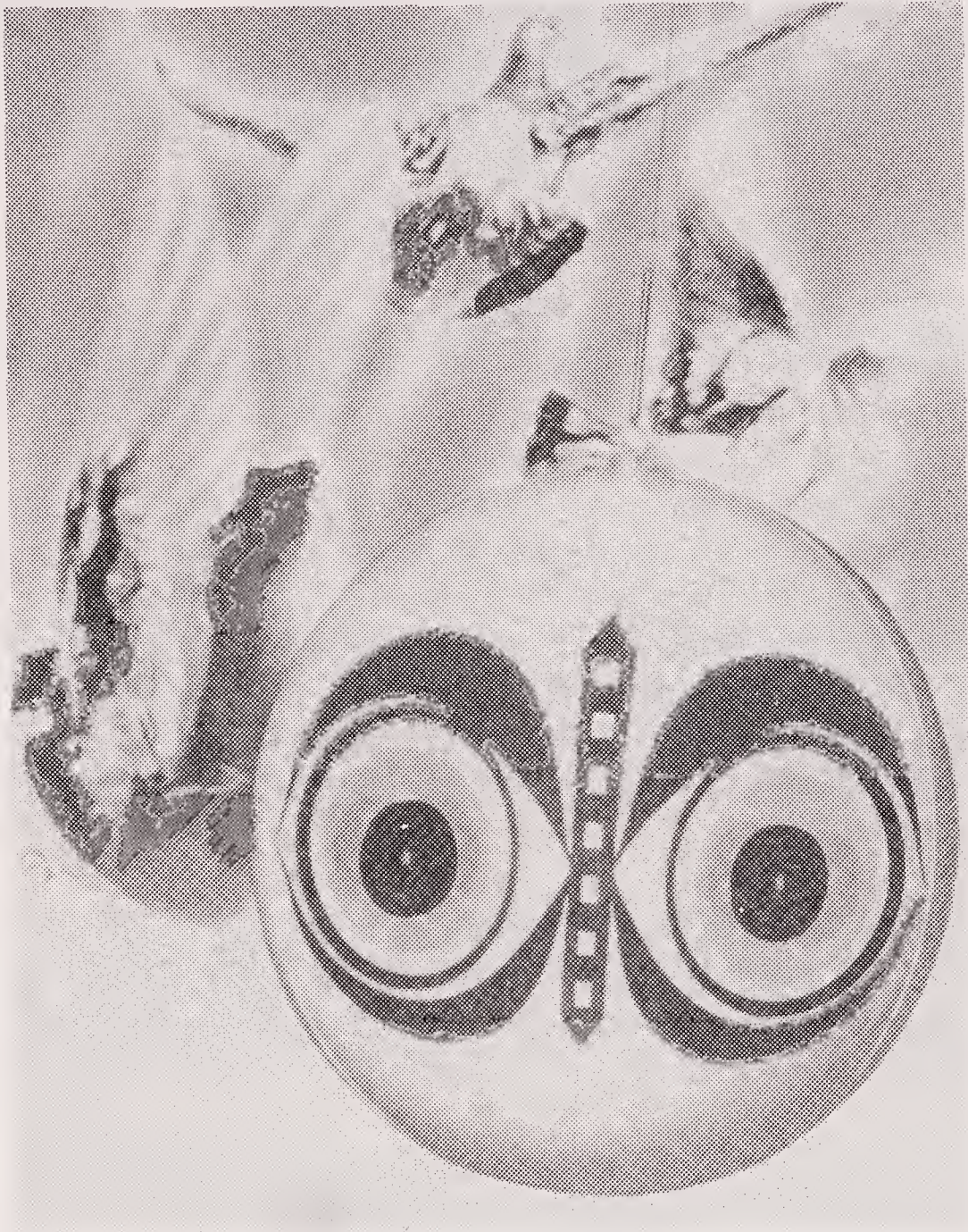
### **Scarin' 'em Away**

Lots of methods have been devised to scare birds away. The old familiar method of setting up a scarecrow isn't all



that bad, but as with anything else, birds get used to it and are soon back roosting on the scarecrow's head. Streamers, pie tins on a string, and pinwheels blowing in the wind may work.

Most birds are scared stiff of owls and hawks. Owl effigies can do a good job if you put them where birds roost or bother crops. Flying hawk figures help too.



*Bird-X Terror Eyes*

Fully phony things like the "terror eyes" can do a good job of scaring the bejammers out of pesky birds.



Noise is the most often used scare tactic for birds. A radio will have some effect, but not much. There are commercially made noise-making devices that work better. These will either give off loud and irritating noises (not unlike what you'll hear at your kids' dances) or a distress call at varying intervals to scare those critters.

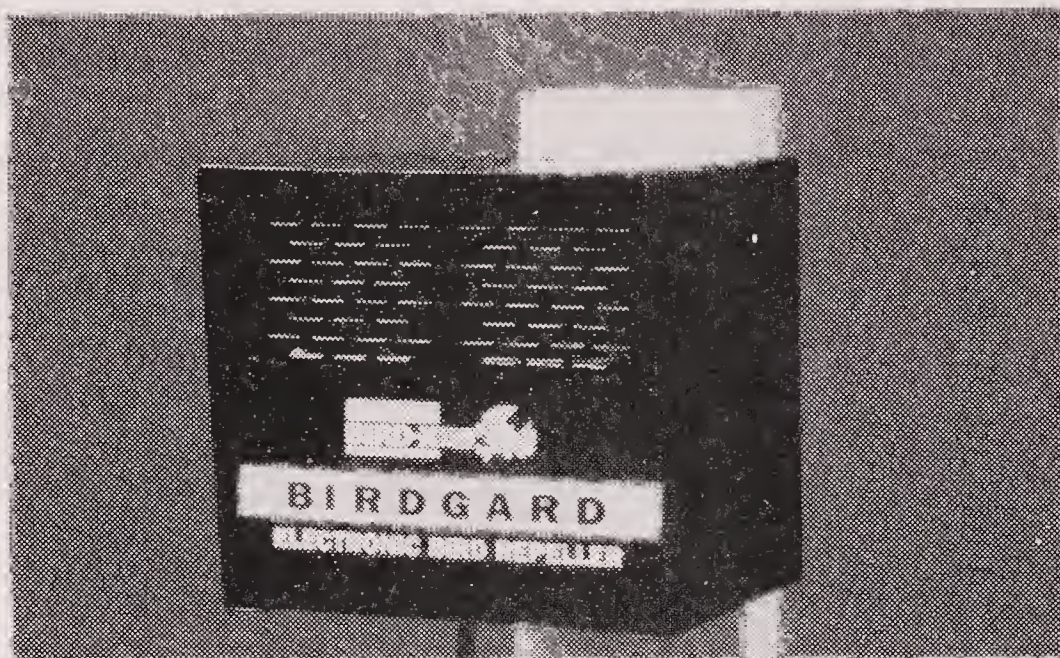
Firing off a round from a gun will help, but it has to be done frequently or it will also lose its effect.



And, if you have to be warned about the dangers of gunplay in a populated area, you're not fit to even carry a sharp object, much less a firearm.



One company even manufactures a cannon that gives off a blast that'll curl their tail feathers. If you get one of these things, don't forget they can be a lot of fun at parties, too.



*Bird-X Electronic noisemaker*

The key to any successful use of scare tactics with birds is timing and diversity. You will have to use more than one technique and the time that noisemakers and lighting devices go on will have to be varied.

### **Messin' with their Turf**

Thinning and pruning of trees may cause birds to move out of an area.

### **Kickin' 'em Out**

Some birds can be caught in cage traps. Most cage traps for birds don't have the traditional trip pan and falling door. Instead, bird traps have some sort of funnel entrance that allows one-way passage into a large holding area.

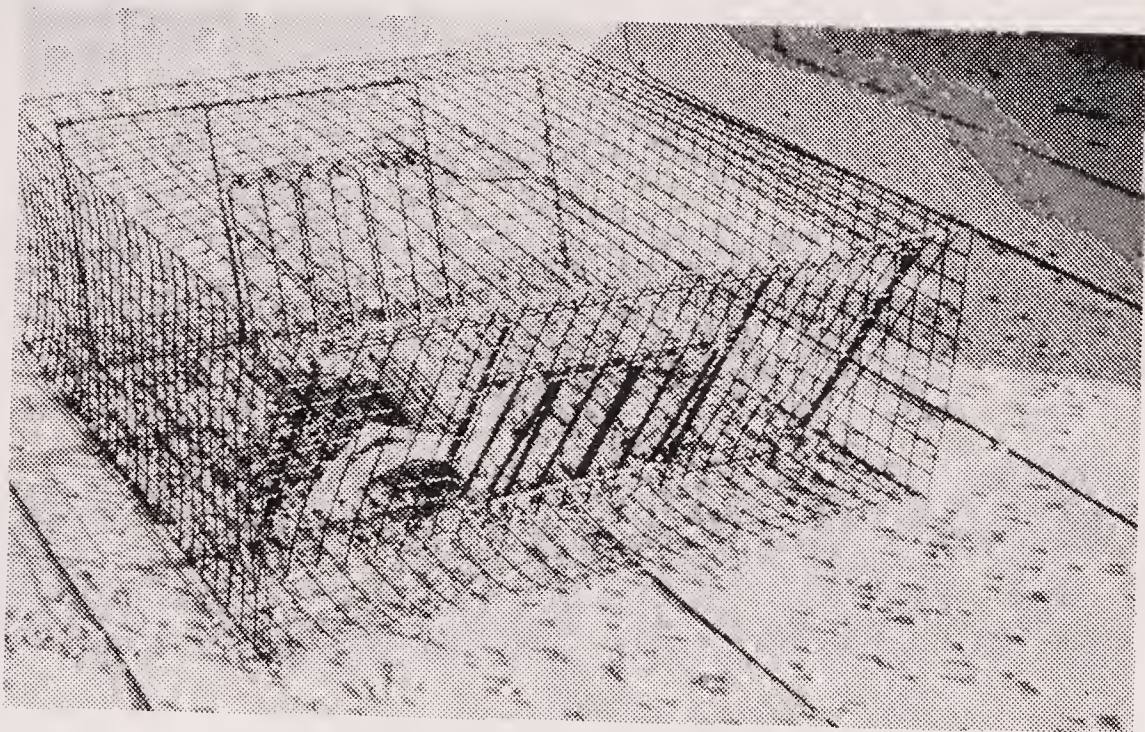
Starling traps are usually built so the bird enters by dropping down through the top of the trap.



Pigeon traps have entrances on the sides. These traps have a row of wire across the opening that pigeons can push in through, but they cannot push out through once they're inside.

Sparrow cage traps are made with both top and side entrances.

Some experimenting with the location of cage traps for birds may be necessary. Generally, good places to put them are roof tops for pigeons, building rafters for sparrows. On the ground near areas where they feed and roost are the best for starlings.



*Pigeon trap on roof - baited with corn.*

Most birds are party animals. Normally where one bird goes, several will follow. For this reason, when birds are caught in traps, usually more than one is caught at a time. You might well catch a dozen pigeons or twenty or thirty sparrows or starlings at one time.

Since birds are naturally a little shy, they will be pretty leery of your trap at first. You can take advantage of their social nature by using a live bird as a decoy inside the trap. If you do this, be sure to give it plenty of feed and water.



Good bait for sparrows, starlings, and pigeons is cracked corn, ground livestock feeds, and commercial wild bird feed. If you're of a mind to snag a crow, on the other hand, it'll work better to use a meat bait.

What ever kind of bait you use, it really works well to put some inside the trap and scatter some around outside of it. That way, the birds will get to pigging down on that bait on the outside and will be willing to go into the trap for the tasty morsels in there.

A clever trap for sparrows is the LAST PERCH. This trap takes advantage of the habit sparrows have of snooping into small openings. Sparrows investigate small openings

**LOOK !**

in the trap, wiggle into them, then are dropped into a holding container at the bottom of the trap. A good place to put the LAST PERCH is up under the peak of the roof.

Patience is definitely a virtue when trapping birds. Many folks find that they can have a trap set for weeks and never take a prisoner. Then one day the trap will be plum full of culprits.

## THE DASTARDLY DUO

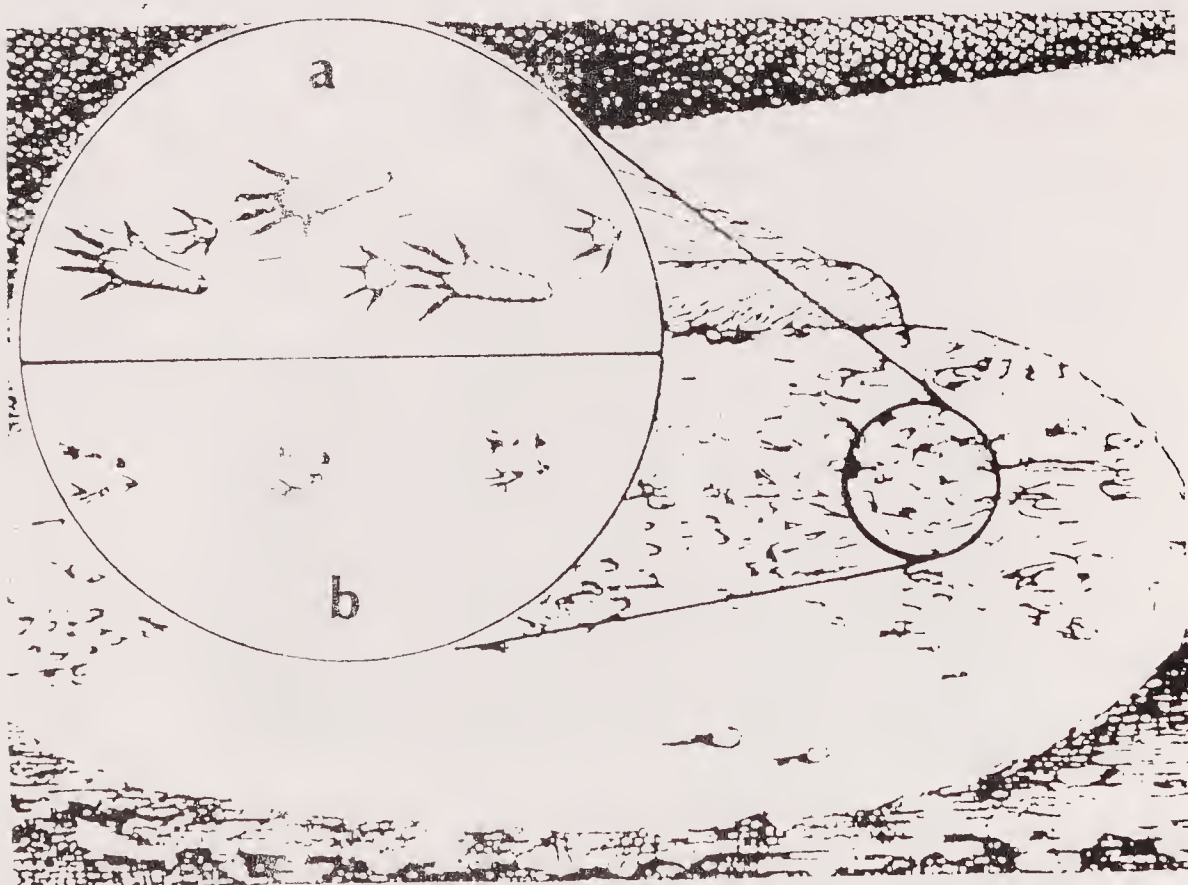
Five percent of the pests we have to cross paths with cause 95% of the problems. And, you know who we're talking about. It's those rats and mice.

It isn't necessarily any fun to have to deal with these snotty little critters, but it's not all that bad. There are a lot of things you can do to solve rat and mice problems.

Since they are much alike and since what works for one will work for the other many times, we're putting them both in this one, big happy chapter.

### *About the Bad Guys*

The house mouse is a tiny rodent, weighing in at less than an ounce. It is mainly nocturnal, although it might well be out during the day looking for new and creative ways of making a pest of itself.



*Tracks left by (a) Norway rat and (b) house mouse in dust.*

Mice have poor eyesight so they depend on their hearing, their sense of smell, taste, and touch.

Mice can dig well and may burrow into the ground in fields or around buildings when they can't find other shelter. They build nests in these burrows made of shredded things such as paper or burlap. They loosely weave these materials together into a ball about four to six inches in diameter to make the nest.

Rats are a stocky, burrowing rodent. They'll weigh about a pound, and pound for pound are pretty disgusting creatures.

Rats have a history much like mice. Since they first came into the U.S. about 1775, they have spread throughout the lower 48 states, Mexico, and into Canada. They generally live wherever people do. They like buildings, concrete slabs, garbage dumps, stream banks, ponds, and anywhere they can find food, water, and shelter. They live in barns, granaries, livestock buildings silos, kennels, houses, cellars, warehouses, stores, docks and sewers.



Although they'll climb to the tops of tall buildings, they prefer to live on the lower floors.



Rats are mainly night folks but will tend to more running around in the daytime as their populations in any given area go up.

Like mice, rats have poor eyesight, and depend more on their hearing, sense of smell, taste, and touch. They are pretty much gnawing, scratching, climbing, digging, and swimming machines.

Those ratty rats will eat almost anything, but their favorites are cereal grains, meat, fish, some fruit, and anything expensive.

Cut, back to the mice . . . . .

Seeing one of those little squeakers is usually the first sign that you have a problem. Or, you might first learn about them being around by discovering their droppings. You may see their tracks in the dust on the floor. You may first known of them from

laying awake one night and hearing their gnawing or the sounds they make as they scurry around in the walls or overhead. You may hear them squeaking or find their nests while you're cleaning. You might smell them; they have a musty odor that humans are sensitive to.

On the other hand, the first sign of rats might well be gnawed woodwork or chewed-open feed sacks. They dig holes with openings 3-5 inches in diameter around buildings.

Mice are, without a doubt, the most troublesome pests in America, even more so than telephone solicitors. The money they cost us is astronomical. House mice get into



buildings by gnawing, climbing, jumping and swimming. They cause structural damage to buildings. Often, mice will make their homes inside of electrical appliances where they'll chew on wiring and cause short circuits. It's kind of poetic justice that, in so doing, the mouse's pants turn blue. But, it's worse than that. That chewing around on wires is both dangerous and expensive to repair.

Not only do those nasty little critters set fire to our buildings by ill-advised wire chewing, but they also carry a full complement of diseases and parasites.

Anything that mice have been into, especially food, should be regarded as contaminated and discarded.

Not to be outdone by their germy little friends, rats are really good at carrying diseases, too. The losses that happen from disease spread by these animals is probably far more than dollar loses to property. Historically,



plagues that resulted in the deaths of thousands were spread by rats.

Rats screw things up well when they do their gnawing. Like mice, they'll cause structural damage to buildings and contaminate things.

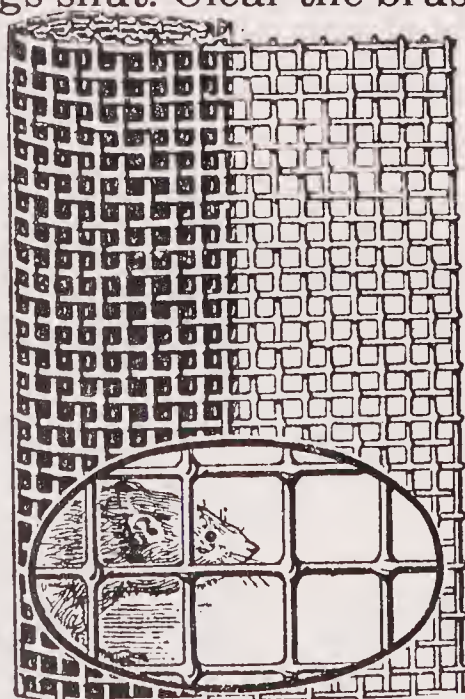


A reliable method of getting shed of mice has been a dream of mankind since the first women leaped up on the first chair. Many an inventor has worked on new ways of doing that. Throughout history, patent offices have been overwhelmed with patent applications for folks seeking the better mouse trap. I've worked on that problem a lot myself.

### Shuttin' 'em Out

"Rodent Proofing" is something easier said than done. It's a combination of putting up things that rats or mice can't get through and making the area unappealing to them. A mouse can get into a building through a hole that is only half an inch wide.

Cover openings into buildings with one-quarter inch hardware cloth or steel. Patch all cracks in the foundation and keep doors to buildings shut. Clear the brush and debris away from around the buildings, and clean up boards, rock piles, or other things that rodents could hide in or under. Often rats and mice will make their homes under buildings and animal feeders that are mounted on skids. Close off the bottoms of these with boards or hardware cloth to keep them out.



### Scarin' 'em Away

You can get a number of noisemakers and chemical repellents for mice and rats. Anything that makes an unusually loud or novel sound will work, at least for awhile.



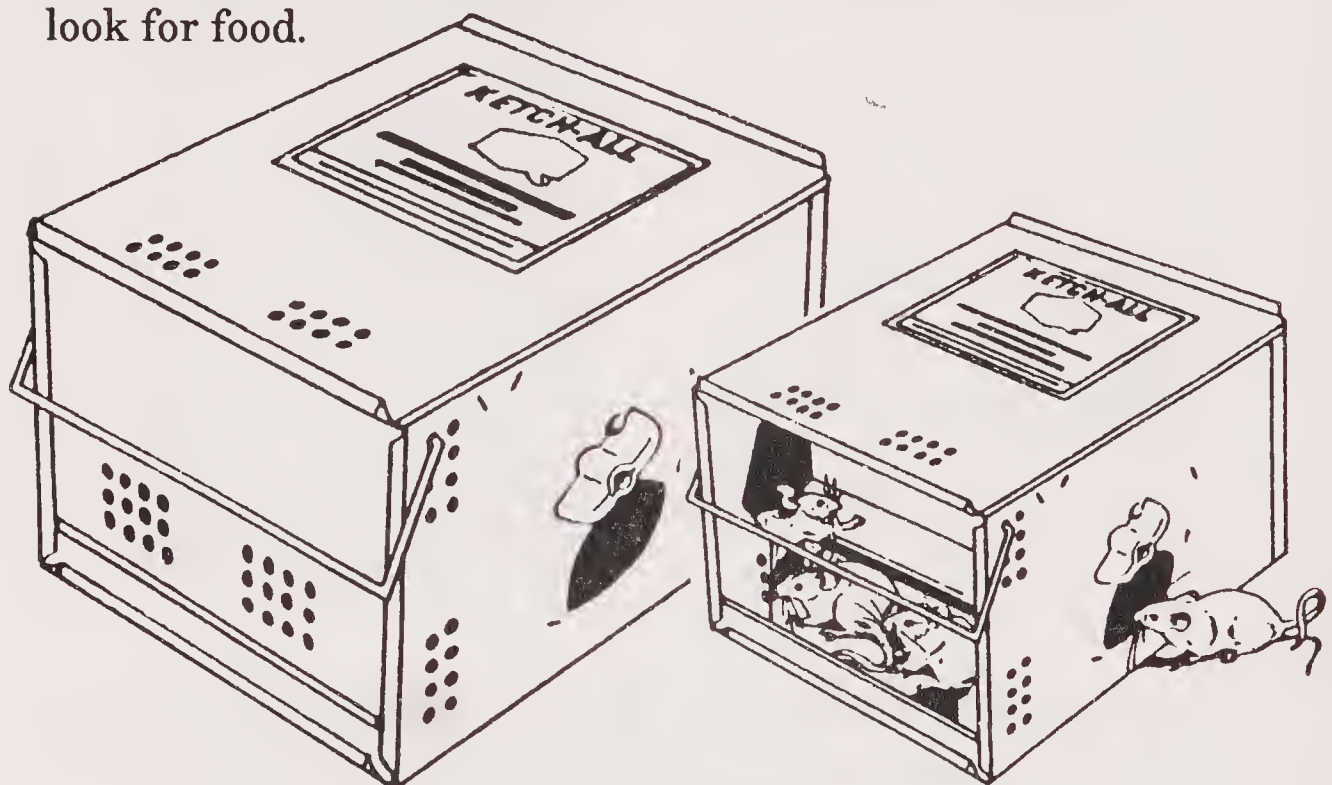
## Messin' with their Turf

You'll probably never totally eliminate the possibility of vermin and their carryings-on. But, don't get discouraged; you can certainly slow 'em down. Just cleaning up the area will often make them think that somewhere else might be a lot more fun.

## Kickin' 'em Out

The old standby grocery store variety mouse trap so familiar to everyone has been the demise of more mice than any other method. It'll take more than one trap, and lots of time and patience to wipe out a local population using these little traps, but it can be done.

A couple of unique mousetraps capable of snaring more than one at a time are the KETCH-ALL® and the Victor TIN CAT. These traps are at hardware stores, farm/home supply stores, etc. They work on the principal that mice will go into small openings without hesitation as they look for food.



*KETCH-ALL® Automatic Mousetrap -- catches 15-20 mice in one setting without bait or poisonous chemicals.*

The KETCH-ALL® has a spring-powered rotating mechanism that, when triggered by an errant mouse, entraps the mouse in a special holding compartment. The TIN CAT has one-way doors that mice can't come back out of once they get in. Keeping one of these things around all the time will help keep those little snots under control.

When setting any mousetrap, put it someplace where the mice are living. Mice always travel next to something such as a wall. Set the trap right up against the wall so they'll run into it. Traps set out in the middle of a room are good for catching toes during your midnight refrigerated raid, but that's about all they'll get.

You'll find good baits for mice right in your kitchen. Peanut butter, honey, and cheese work well.



If you plan on doing a lot of mousetrapping, a mixture of peanut butter, oatmeal, and honey is a good, long-lasting, and attractive bait for those little furry scampers.

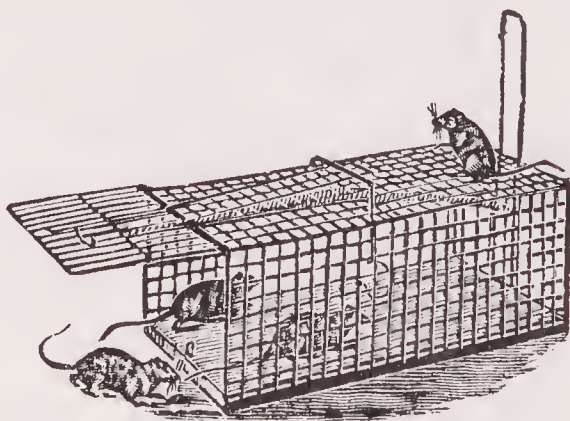
If you've had a trap set for a week and still no action ..... move it or try a different bait. Here's a surprise. You should keep mousetraps clean! But, there's a good reason for that. The odors from humans or dead mice will cause your would-be quarry to turn tail and run away if he smells those things.

One quick home-remedy trap involves using a five-gallon bucket or a barrel. Put some boards at an incline up and over the lip of the barrel. Then put a good amount of really smelly bait inside of it. Mice will climb the boards and try to get at the bait where they will fall into the barrel or bucket. They'll find themselves down in there and unable to get back out.

This board and barrel technique also gives you an opportunity to say "I told you so" to your prisoner since he'll still be alive. This is good therapy for a homeowner. It's awfully hard to give a good chewin' out to a mouse that's in a trap, deader than a doornail.

Rats can be caught in small cage traps. You don't need to worry about hiding them. Rats live right amongst the appliances of humans, so they'll have little fear of cage traps. They might be a little shy at first, but they'll get over that soon enough.

Both single- and double-door traps work well for rats. Traps will need a light trip-pan tension and should be in



the size range of 5" x 5" x 15" to 8" x 8" 24". Put the baited traps near, but not on, the runways and trailways used by rats. Good baits are anything edible, but it's best to use one that has an odor. You may have to do a little experimentation since rats in any given locality tend to develop preferences based on what is available. A good place to start is a mixture of peanut butter, molasses, and honey mixed with oatmeal.



Where there's one rat, there are probably more.

Populations of several dozen may live together in just one small building. It's best to set several traps where you have a bunch of those ratty things. It might take several weeks to get rid of them all, so keep at it.

There are lots of poisons, glue boards and other products available for rats, but be careful when using such things. You don't want to end up catching, or poisoning a pet or the neighbor's kid.





## THE ETHICS OF PEST CONTROL

Just because some innocent animal has imposed itself on you and you are having to go to the trouble of getting rid of it is no reason to be cruel.

And, don't forget the long arm of the law. You need to find out what the local laws are. In general, however, as long as the way you use to get rid of your pests is one that doesn't cause injury, death, or use any illegal means of capture, you won't find yourself on the wrong side of the law. You have to use your head on this, of course. I don't think the local man in blue is going to come hunting you down if you catch a mouse in a trap that sends that mouse to that great cheese factory in the sky.



Another consideration is your neighbors. Don't do something that is going to cause the animal to become someone else's problem. Tense relationships are going to happen if your pest problem suddenly becomes theirs due to something you did.

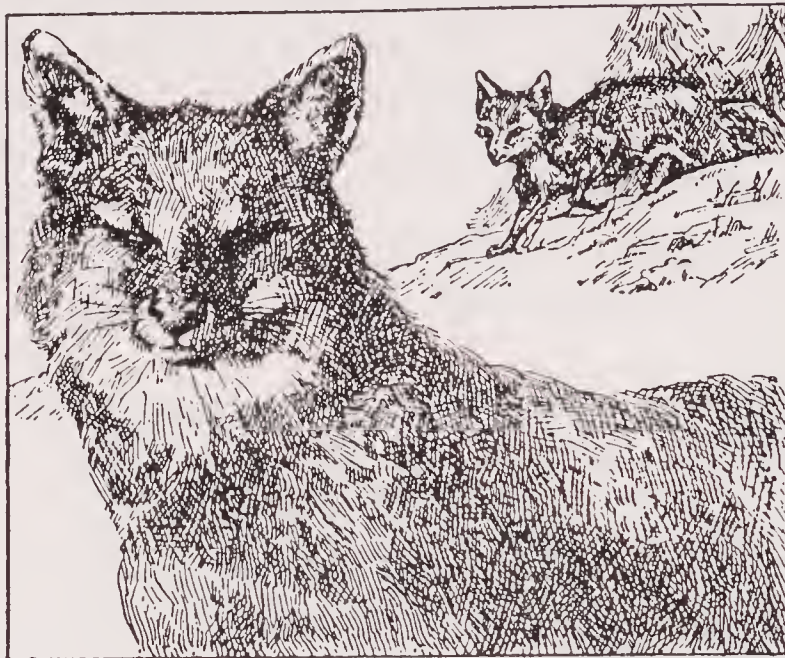
Be sure the tactics of animal control you are using are not a menace to people or the environment. Avoid chemicals that might be tampered with by kids. If you set a trap where kids might get to it, and end up catching something in it, those kids are going to want to investigate. A little finger stuck into the trap to attract the animal's attention might not come back out.

If you mess up a neighbor's kid, you can find a whole new



set of problems that make over-turned garbage cans or swiped sweetpeas seem like nothing.

Many common nuisance animals like rabbits, squirrels, raccoons, opossums, etc. are also legal game animals. Try to catch these animals during legal hunting or trapping seasons. Also, many nuisance animals not considered recognized game animals are protected under both state and federal laws.



Make sure you understand all laws relating to pest control and be certain you have gotten all the licenses and permission you need before you start any animal control adventures that involves actual hands-on dealing with the animal. If you're in doubt about what is legal or illegal, ask a local authority such as the police, sheriff or game department.

If you violate any laws in your pest-control efforts, be sure you have this book paid for before you embark on your project. You might end up paying so many fines or spending so much time in the hoosegow that you can't afford to buy the book.

Certain pests like the common house sparrow and the rat are such shady characters that they are not protected by any state or federal laws. If there are no local ordinances, the homeowner is free to take care of unprotected pests

at his or her own discretion.

If you are going to use traps, by all means use them wisely. Cage traps are, for example, a very humane method of coping with pests. However, it is not just the traps themselves that are humane. Humane treatment is controlled by the trapper. Cage trappers have an obligation to any captured animal. That obligation is to give the animal good care. With cage trapping, all it takes is regular checking of the traps (at least once a day, and better yet ...twice), not doing anything to harm the captured animal, and releasing it to a safe habitat as soon as possible.





## SAFE HANDLING

The best methods of taking care of pests are those that keep them from becoming pests in the first place! However, this isn't always possible. Getting rid of a pest sometimes involves handling the animal in some way.

Folks who handle animals, without taking the right precautions, risk getting scratches or bites that can get infected. Even worse, animals can carry many different diseases, some of which can be transmitted to people via bites or scratches.

A captured animal can be defensive, sometimes even frantic. Captured animals should be moved at least ten miles from where you got them, and released into an area that has everything they need to live. It's best that this be a natural area or animal preserve where people don't



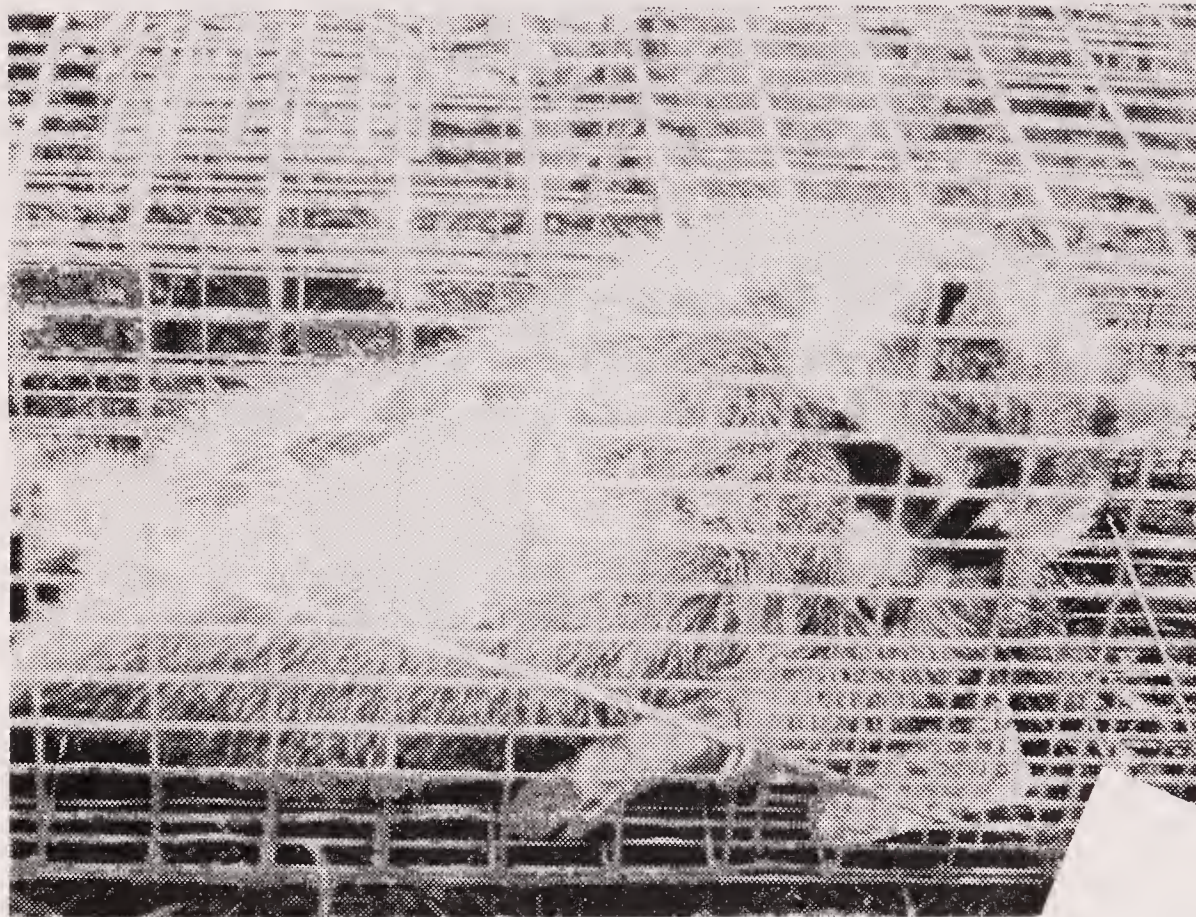
live. If it's not possible to find such a place, enlist the aid of local animal wardens to take care of the pest for you.

If the animal looks sick, don't even try to move it! Rather, contact the local public health people and follow their



advice, or let them do with the animal as they see fit.

Never handle an animal that acts unnatural. Notice the



eyes and the reclined posture of this raccoon. These indicate that the animal is not well.

Once you've gotten to where you're going to let an animal go, open the cage trap and back away a good distance. Don't stand in front of the open door!! Some critters will be so upset by their captivity that they'll come at you. And, believe me, if you've ever seen a thirty-pound sow raccoon coming at you at what appears to be a thousand miles an hour, and she seems to be nothing but long claws and sharp teeth, you'll know what real troubles are!

If you're well out of the way, the animal will usually turn around and give you a sour look, then proceed calmly on his way back to where he belongs.

Always wear leather gloves when handling cages or anything with an animal in it to keep your hands from being scratched or bitten. Never do anything to antago-



nize or excite the critter. It'll be scared stiff as it is.

If you're moving something in a cage trap, it helps keep things on an even keel if you throw a blanket or tarp over the whole trap. This tends to calm the animal and makes him less dedicated to snipping off one of your fingers.

This fellow is demonstrating how NOT to handle a cage trap with an animal in it. If this guy were to make a practice of this wrong way to do it, this might well be the

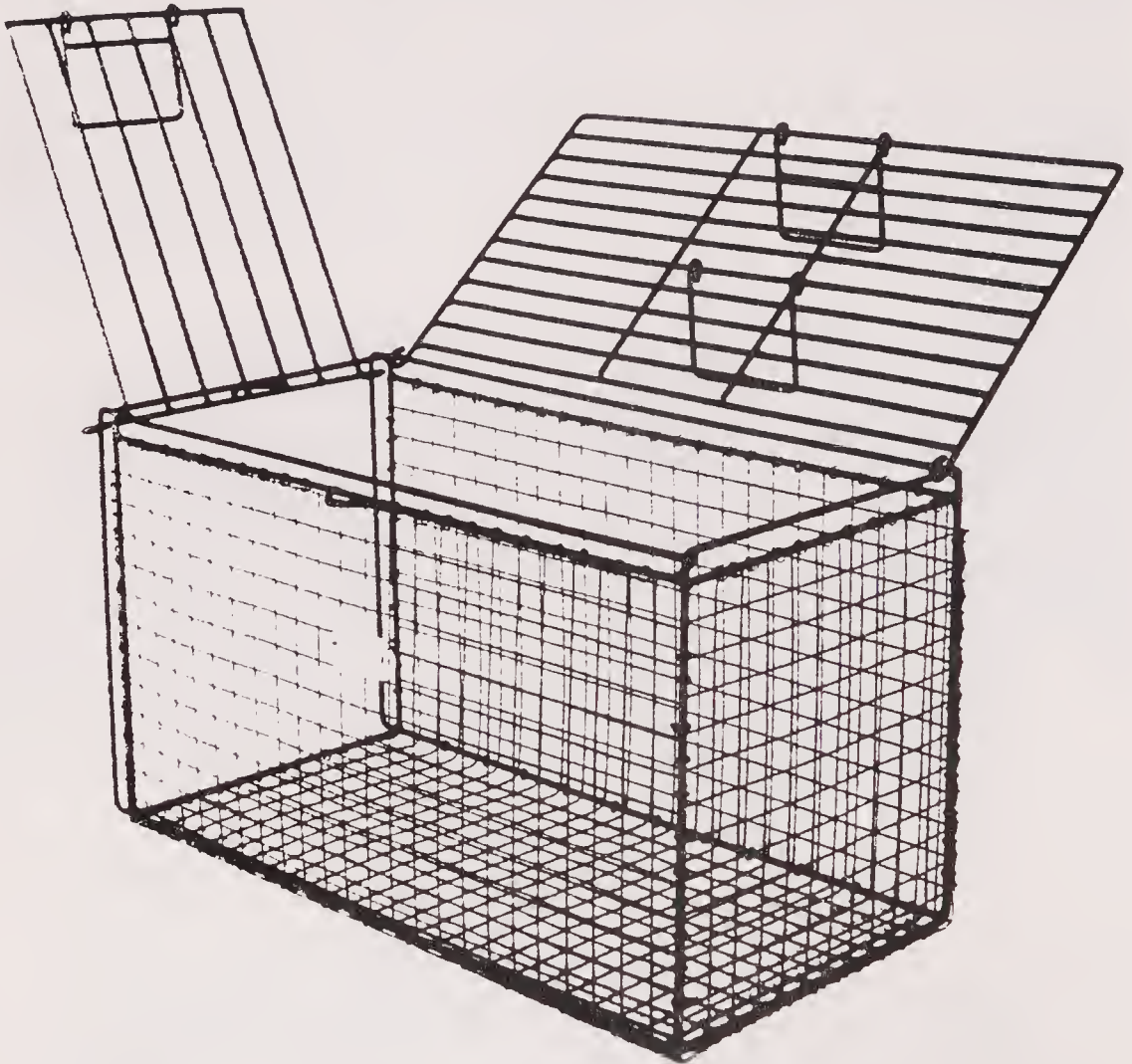


last photo of him available in which he has all ten fingers.

Be especially careful when moving supposedly tame animals such as dogs and cats in cars. A normally calm cat or dog thrown into a car with the intention of taking it to the pound can become a rampaging maniac, dashing about the vehicle. The problem this causes the driver can be downright hazardous to his or her health as well as to



the health and well-being of anyone else on the same highway. ALWAYS TRANSPORT DOMESTIC PETS, OR ANY OTHER ANIMAL, IN SOME SORT OF CAGE.



If you're trying to chase some un-invited guest out of a building, be careful, particularly if the animal is cornered. Most animals prefer the "flight rather than fight" strategy. But, if they are cornered or otherwise agitated enough, they may turn on you. Sometimes it works well to use a long-handled tool to poke and prod the animal if you have to herd it away. It doesn't hurt, however, to remember that a rat can run up a broomstick to bite your hand quicker than you can say "Ouch!!"

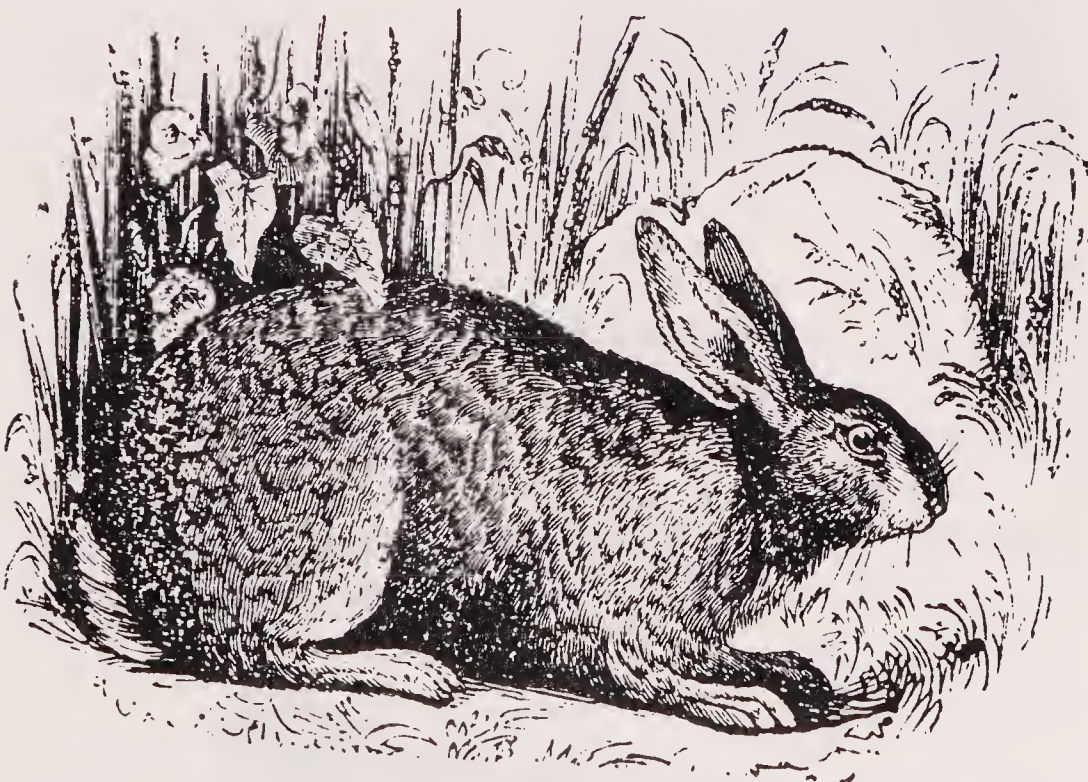
## GETTIN' EVEN RECIPES

Some pesky critters such as squirrels, raccoons, rabbits, woodchucks, deer, and opossums are game animals. They can be finger-lickin' good if fixed right.

Following are some of my personal favorite game recipes. But, before preparing any wild game, be sure you follow certain procedures.

Immediately after dispatching the animal, skin or pluck your quarry, remove the internal organs, and put it in the refrig with a drawing solution of salt water for at least twelve hours.

Then fix him according to one of these recipes or others and eat your pest problems away. That's why we call these *Gettin' Even Recipes*.







## Roast Beaver or Raccoon

Flour  
Paprika  
Salt and pepper

Onion, sliced  
Garlic Salt  
1/2" water in  
roaster so it doesn't cook dry

Remove all fat from animal. Soak in salt water overnight. Drain and soak in fresh water until ready to use. Dry off. Cut meat into serving pieces. Coat pieces with flour in brown paper bag. Fry until golden brown. Place in heavy roaster. Add rest of the ingredients. Roast in oven 2 hours at temp. of 375-400°.

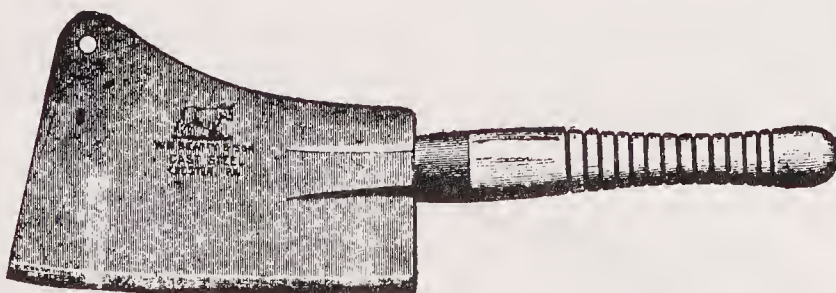


## Beaver Burgers

Beaver meat

Ground Pork

Cut up beaver meat and grind it, add equal amount of ground pork. Make patties. Fry.



## Game Sausage

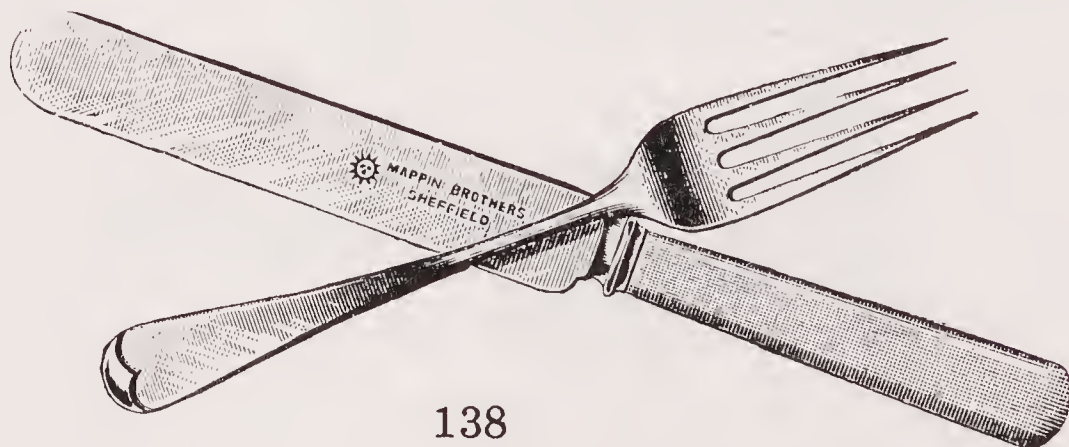
3 lbs. bones, ground	1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper
game meat	1/2 tsp. allspice
2 lbs. ground bacon	1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1 dried red peppers, (minced)	Casings (optional)
1 T. coarse black pepper	
1/2 oz. salt	

Mix all ingredients well. Stuff or form into patties. Can be used immediately or frozen. Are excellent smoked, grilled or baked in 375° oven for 40 to 45 minutes.

## Sour Braten Rabbits

1/4 cup vinegar	Paprika
salt (optional)	5 Bay Leaves
1/4 - 1/2 cup oil	12 Peppercorns
1/4 cup flour	1 cup red wine
1 large onion	1 rabbit, dressed
	and cut up

Soak rabbit overnight in vinegar and salt water. Rinse and drain rabbit and put in a paper sack with flour and shake well until coated. In a large skillet, add oil and heat. Fry rabbit well until golden brown and sprinkle with paprika. Lay in an oven roaster. Brown the sliced onion and layer over the top of the rabbit. Add five bay leaves (do not crush), then you can remove them when done. Add the peppercorns. Add water to barely cover the meat, put on the lid and put in oven until the meat is tender. Pour red wine over this and simmer 1/2 hour more.

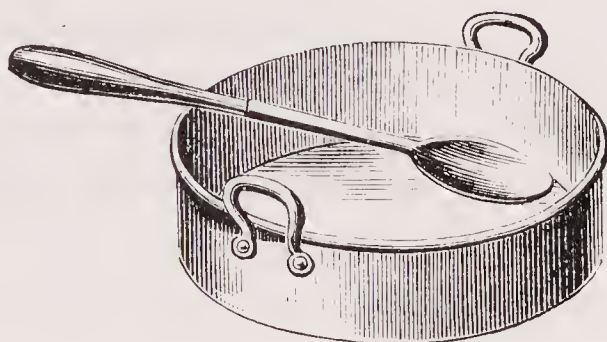


## Oven Fried Rabbit

2 young rabbits,  
cleaned and cut up  
1/4 cup bitter or oleo  
1/4 cup cooking oil

3/4 cup flour  
1 T. salt  
1/2 tsp pepper

Mix the flour, salt, and pepper; dredge each piece in the mixture. Put the floured pieces in a well-oiled shallow pan. Melt the butter, mix with the cooking oil, and pour



over the rabbit, which should be only one layer deep in the pan. Bake in a 375° oven for 1-1/2 hours. After the first 45 minutes, turn each piece to brown on the other side. *Note: Very good when served with fluffy buttered rice, green peas, and hot baking-powder biscuits.*

## Barbecued Rabbit

1 very young rabbit  
Salt and pepper  
Olive oil or butter  
2 T. gravy

1 T. lemon juice  
1 tsp. French mustard  
Fried parsley sprigs  
Slices of lemon

Allow the whole rabbit to lie in salted water for one hour; dry it thoroughly. Score the back and legs, season, and brush with olive oil or melted butter. Heat gravy and add the lemon juice and mustard; correct the seasoning. Grill the rabbit 20-25 minutes, basting and turning it often. Divide into parts and place on a hot dish. Pour the sauce over and garnish with parsley and lemon slices.

Makes 3-4 servings.



## Squirrel Stew

### *Marinade:*

1/2 cup vinegar  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
2 T. salt  
Cold water to cover game

### *Stew:*

2-3 squirrels	Salt & pepper to taste
1 large onion, diced	1/2 tsp oregano
1/2 large green pepper, diced	1 T. dry parsley
2 stalks celery, sliced	3 T. tomato saude
2 cloves garlic, chopped	Cayenne pepper to taste
	1 cup liquid (wine, cider, tomato juice, water)



*This is a picture of a squirrel that just found out what it was going to cost him to send his kid to college for one year.*

Mix ingredients for marinade and soak squirrels overnight. Cup up squirrels and brown with vegetables in a hot skillet for 5-10 minutes. Place all stew ingredients in a slow-cooker like a crockpot and cook 8-10 hours on low.

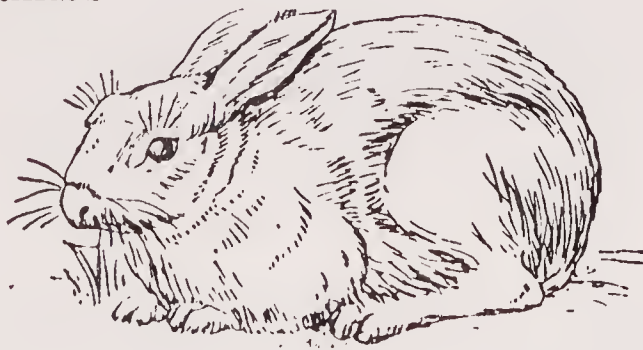
## Baked Squirrel

2 cut-up squirrels	2 onions, sliced
Flour	2 cloves garlic, minced
Salt & pepper	2 cans cream of mushroom
Oil	soup
1/2 cup green onions & parsley	

Coat squirrel pieces with flour seasoned with salt and pepper. Brown in oil and remove from skillet. Line baking dish with foil and put squirrel in dish. Add onion and garlic; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Blend soup with small amount of water and pour over squirrel. Bake at 325° for 2 hours. Open foil and add green onion and parsley. Re-seal and cook for an additional 10-15 minutes. Serves 2-4, depending on how mad they are at the squirrels.

## Baked Rabbit

1 rabbit, cut into serving pieces	1/2 tsp ground rosemary
1/4 cup butter	1/2 tsp dry mustard
1/3 tsp bulk pepper	1/2 cup orange juice
1/3 cup fine, dry bread crumbs	1T. parsley flakes



Put butter in a casserole dish to hold rabbit in a single layer. Put in oven and melt butter. Mix bread crumbs, pepper, parsley flakes, rosemary, and dry mustard. Roll rabbit pieces in melted butter, and then coat with bread crumb mix. Add orange juice to remaining butter in a casserole dish. Arrange rabbit in dish, cover with foil,

*continued .....*

*Baked Rabbit continued . . . .*

and bake for 45 minutes. Remove from the oven, turn rabbit over, cover again, and put in the oven for another 45-60 minutes until meat is fork tender. Put rabbit under broiler for five minutes before serving to crisp and brown crust. Serves 3.

### **Barbecued Raccoon**

1 young raccoon	1 tsp salt
5 sliced medium-sized carrots	1/4 tsp pepper
2 small onions, sliced	1 bay leaf
1/2 tsp ground sage	4 cups water
1 tsp ground garlic	2 lb. jar BBQ sauce

Clean raccoon thoroughly and remove all fat, including the buttons of fat under legs. Wash meat in warm water and cut into serving pieces.



Bring above ingredients to a boil and simmer gently 2 to 2-1/2 hours until coon is tender. Drain broth, reserving it for later use. When meat is tender, remove all meat from bone. Put meat, 1 cup reserved brother, and a 2-lb. jar of BBQ sauce in a Dutch Oven. Simmer meat and sauce for 1 hour. Serve with mashed potatoes and gravy made from the remaining broth.



## Deer Chili

4 lbs minced meat	1-1/2 T. comino seeds
5 cloves minced garlic	1 T. salt
5 T. chili powder	1T. white pepper
2-1/2 T. paprika	2 qt. water

First you get your deer. Brown the meat in a small amount of grease in a kettle, add the garlic, chili powder, paprika, comino seeds, salt, and pepper (This is a man's dish .....for ladies with a milder taste, use less pepper.) Stir in 2 qt. of water. Cover and cook slowly, stirring occasionally for about 3 hours. If more water is needed during cooking, add one cup at a time. It may be served as is or with equal parts cooked pink beans or red kidney beans. Makes 3-1/2 quarts.

## Great Venison Steaks

1-1/2 lb. steak	1 cup sliced onions
1 T. mustard	1 diced carrot
1 T. cornstarch	1-1/2 cup tomatoes
1/2 tsp. salt	1/4 tsp pepper

Nick edges of steak so it will not curl. Mix dry ingredients. Pound into both sides of steak. Sear steak, cover with onions, carrots, tomatoes, and bake, covered, for 1-1/2 hours at 375 °.

## Venison Supreme

2 cups red cooking wine
6-8 (1/2 in.) sliced deer loins
1 onion, cut into 1/2 in. rings.

In a deep skillet or electric fry pan, begin simmering wine. Add meat and onion slices. Simmer til done, about 1 hour. If more tenderness is desired, simmer longer. Serve meat garnished with onion slices. Serves 2-3.



## BBQ Deer Chops

2 lb. deer chops	2 T. brown sugar
1 med. onion, chopped	2 T. vinegar
1/2 cup celery, chopped	3 T. worchestershire
2 T. butter	sauce
1 cup ketchup	1/4 cup lemon juice
1 cup water	Salt & pepper

Brown chops in skillet. Remove and put in a baking dish. Brown onions and celery in butter. Add remaining ingredients and cook slowly until flavors are well-blended, about 15 minutes. Pour sauce over chops and bake at 350° for 1-1/2 hours.

## Venison Burgers

2-3 lb. ground venison	16 oz. BBQ sauce
1 large onion, chopped	1/4 tsp salt
1 T. worchestershire	1/4 tsp pepper
sauce	2 T. brown sugar

Brown the venison and the rest of the ingredients. Simmer on low.

## Venison Roast

1 venison roast	3/4 cup bouillon or
1 lemon	consomme
Salt	1/2 cup red wine or
Pepper	1/2 cup cranberry juice
3-4 slices bacon	cocktail

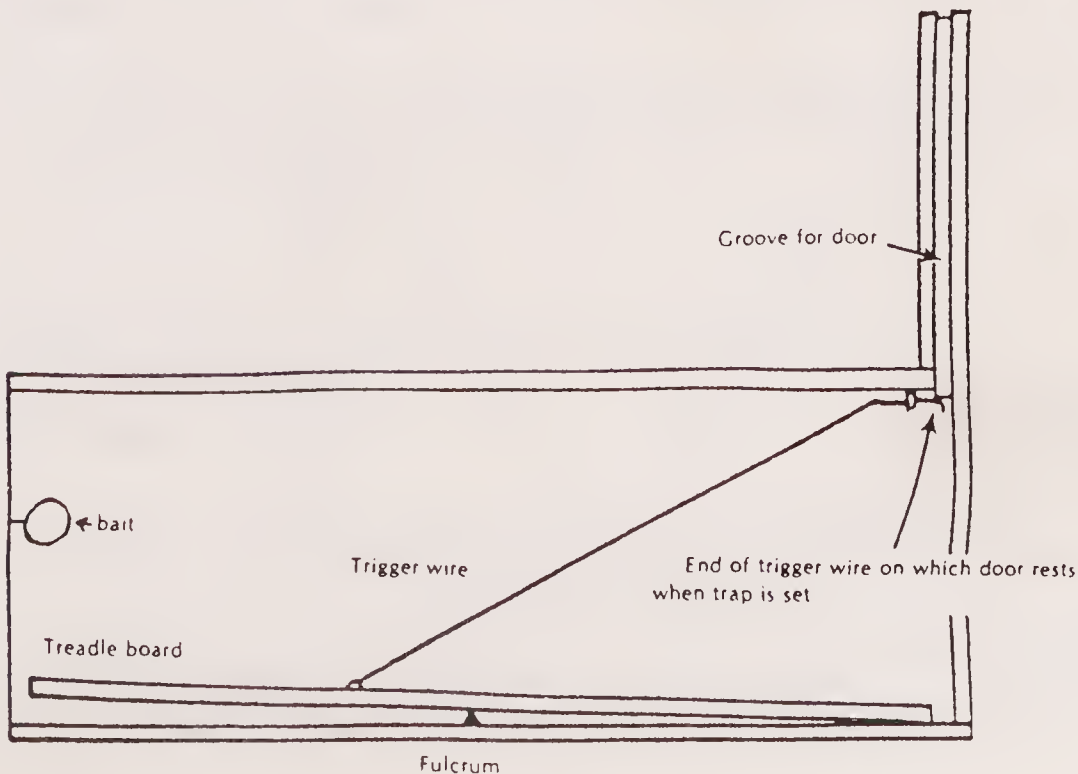
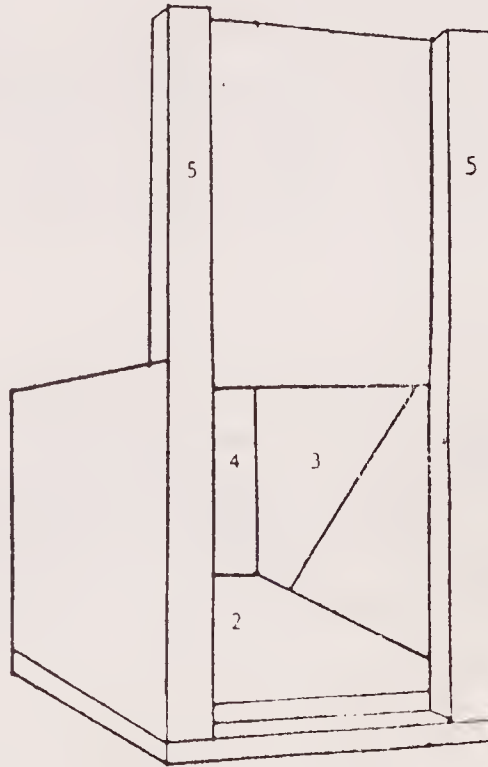
Wipe roast with damp cloth. Squeeze out lemon over surface of roast. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Combine bouillon and wine or juice. Put roast in roasting pan. Heat at 500° for 5-10 minutes, basting frequently with bouillon mixture. Remove bacon when browned. Cover roast loosely with foil. Continue roasting 'til tender, allowing about 20 minutes per pound for medium done.

## CAGE TRAP PLANS

Cage traps can be made from ordinary materials using the usual tools found in a home handyman's shop. Materials needed are wood or steel rods for the framework, sheet metal or wood for the trip pan and doors, hardware cloth or wire mesh, and fasteners such as nails, staples, wire, and wire clips. Two simple designs as shown below.

## Cage Trap for Mammals

- 1 - Door up in grooves guiding its fall.
- 2 - Treadle board resting on a fulcrum. (Fulcrum made by nailing a small piece of wood across floor of trap. Weight of animal on back part of treadle depresses treadle, pulls back trigger wire and allows door to fall.)
- 3 - Trigger wire. (Three-gauge wire is connected to a screw eye at one side of treadle and back of fulcrum, extended along side of box to top of trap and passed through a second screw eye. When trap is set, door rests on the projecting end of trigger wire.)
- 4 - Back wall with 3-inch (7.6 cm) square opening.
- 5 - Uprights containing grooves in which door slides. (Grooves should be greased for easy action of door.)



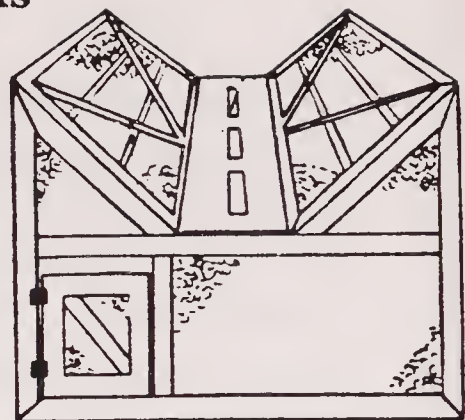


# Large Cage Trap for Birds

## Materials Needed for Trap

15 pieces 1 x 4s 8 feet long  
25 pieces 1 x 4s 6 feet long  
4 pieces 1 x 1s 8 feet long

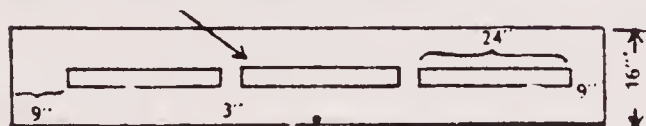
1 piece 1/2 x 16-in exterior plywood, 8 feet long  
2 hinges  
2 lbs staples  
40-ft. length of 6-ft. chicken wire, 1-inch mesh



Assembled starling trap

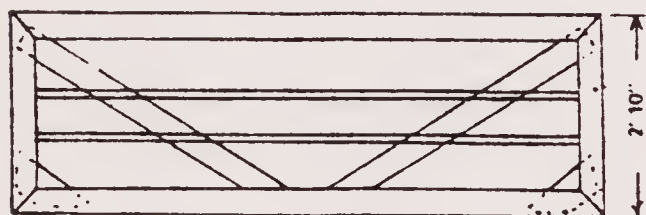
Entrance panel (plywood)

entrance slots must be exactly 1-3/4" wide

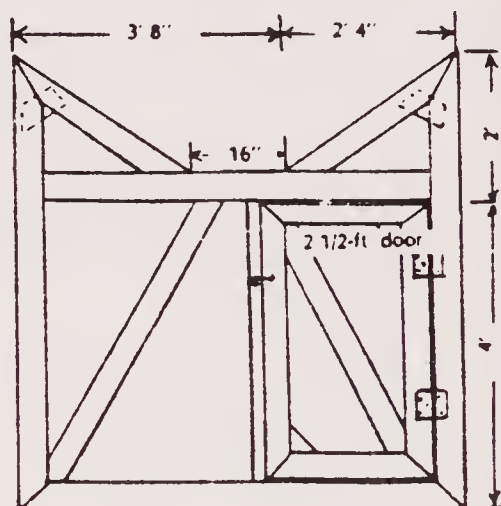


1/2" holes for tying panel to trap roof

8'



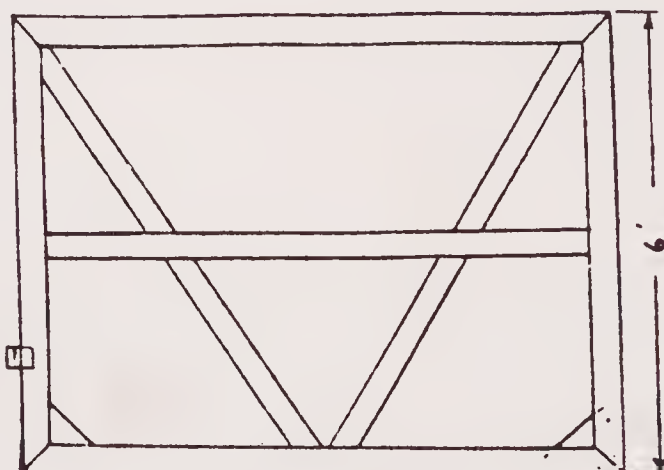
Top panel (make two)



Front panel

Rear panel (omit door)

Matched brackets  
may be used for  
quick assembly



Side panel (make two)

*\*Note:* Smaller sized traps will also work. Just be certain you do not change the size of the entrance slots.

## **COMMERCIAL PEST CONTROL PRODUCTS**

*Below is a list of commercially available  
products for pest control:*

### **CAGE TRAPS**

#### **Beacon Industries, Inc.**

P.O. Box 600

Westminster, MD. 21157

Single-and double-door cage traps for all animals,  
rodent to small dog size.

#### **Hancock Trap Co., Inc.**

P.O. Box 268

Custer, SD. 57730

HANCOCK Live Trap for Beaver and Otter.

#### **H.J. Spencer and Sons**

P.O. Box 131

Gainesville, FL. 32602

SHERMAN LIVE TRAPS. Small cage traps for  
animals mouse to rat size.

#### **Ketch-All Co.**

2537 University Aven.

San Diego, CA 92104

KETCH-ALL Cage Traps. Produce two cage trap  
models, one for small rodents, the other an all  
purpose model. Also the makers of KETCH-ALL Poles  
for handling animals.

**Kness Mfg Co., Inc.**

P.O. Box 70

Albia, IA. 52531

KAGE-ALL Live Traps. Cage traps for all animals small mammal to dog size, including fish and birds. Most famous for the KETCH-ALL repeating mouse trap.

**Manufacturing Systems, Inc.**

P.O. Box 816

Belle Fourche, SD. 57717

TRU-CATCH Live Traps. Cage traps for all animals small mammal to dog size, including skunk, birds and snakes. Transport and transfer cages for all animals.

**Mitlying Development**

P.O. Box 43

Darwin, MN. 55324

MINNESOTA PLASTI-CATCH. Polyurethane Plastic Cage Trap for skunk, raccoon, cat, etc.

**Morrison Manufacturing, Inc.**

P.O. Box 52

Morrison, IA. 50657

SAFE-N-SOUND Live Traps. (Originated by Steve Meyer). Cage traps for all animals, small mammal to dog size, including skunk and birds. Transport and transfer cages for all animals. Custom cage trap and animal cage manufacturing.

**Mustang Mfg. Co.**

P.O. Box 10947

Houston, TX. 77018

MUSTANG Live Catch Traps and Cages. Cage traps



for mammals; chipmunk to raccoon size. Also cage traps for fish, birds, crabs, and turtles.

**Ol' Sam Peabody Co.**

109 North Main St.

Berrien Springs, MI. 49103

OL' SAMS SPARROW TRAP. Repeating live sparrow cage trap.

**Ryan Industries**

Box 430

Mitchellville, IA. 50169

LAST PERCH Sparrow Trap. Repeating live sparrow trap.

**Safeguard Products, Inc.**

114-116 Earland Drive

New Holland, PA. 17557

SAFEGUARD Live Traps. Produce 5 cage trap models for mammals in the squirrel to raccoon size range. Also, animal cages.

**Stendal Products, Inc.**

986 E. Laural Road

Bellingham, WA. 98226

ARRESTOR #3 Skunk cage trap.

**Sullivans Sure Catch Traps**

2324 S. Patterson

Valdosta, GA. 31601

Sullivans Sure Catch Traps. Cage traps for all animals - small mammal to dog size. Cage traps for fish and birds also.

**Tomahawk Live Trap Co.**

P.O. Box 323

Tomahawk, WI. 54487

TOMAHAWK Live Traps. Complete line of cage traps from mouse to dog size. Fish, turtle, bird cage traps. BAILEY Live Beaver Trap. Transport and carrying cages.

**Woodstream Corporation**

Lititz, PA. 17543

and

Niagra Falls, Ontario. L2E 6T3

HAVAHART and VICTOR Cage Traps. Cage traps for all animals, small mammal to dog size. Animal cages.

*EXCLUSIONARY MATERIALS*

**3 E Group**

P.O. Box 392

Moorestown, NJ. 08057

FLASHBAND for Bat Exclusion

**Davlyn Manufacturing Co., Inc.**

P.O. Box B

Springs City, PA. 19475

TREE TENDER - tree wrap protection

**Hyde Bird Feeder Bo.**

56 Felton St.

Waltham, MA. 02154

Squirrel baffles and squirrel resistant feeders.

**Audubon Entities, Inc.**

P.O. Box 370

Walworth, WI. 53184

BIRD GUARDIAN device for keeping predators out of  
bird house nests.

*SCARE DEVICES*

**Bird-X**

730 W. Lake St.

Chicago, IL. 60606-9864

Electric sound and light scare devices for birds.

**Harmon International, Inc.**

Box 1827

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This guide book is full of practical remedies anyone can use to get rid of those varmits and resume a normal life. Practical home remedy pest control is like going to war. First you must understand the enemy. So first, in this book, we spend some time on basic animal behavior. Second, you need a strategy to counter the enemy. In pest control, there are four you can use to make life a little easier. And, finally, you need tactics. There are many, and I've tried to include all of them that are practical.

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